

# Canadian Art



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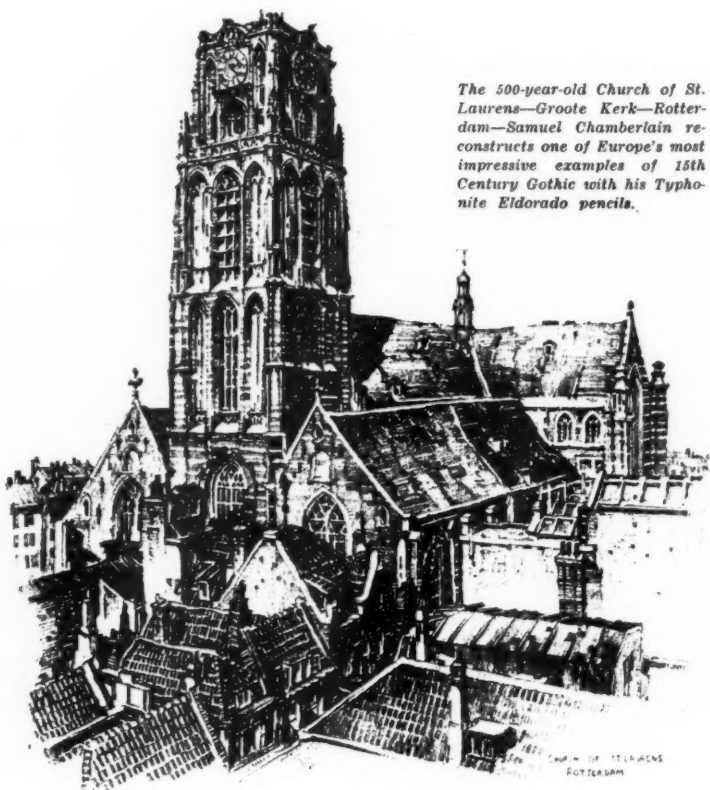
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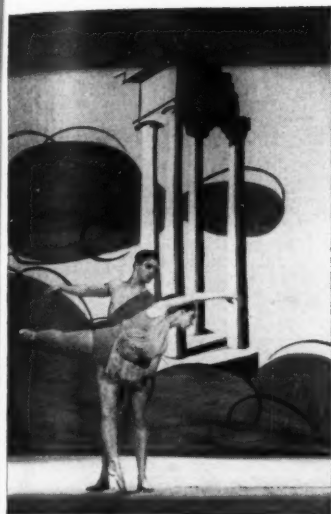
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# CANADIAN ART

## Summer Number

THE CANADIAN FILM AWARDS . . . . .	Page 145
EXPONENT OF A NEW ARCHITECTURE IN PAINT by Donald W. Buchanan . . . . .	149
THE CANADIAN BALLET FESTIVAL by Guy Glover . . . . .	151
AN EXHIBITION OF CANADIAN SCULPTURE by Andrew Bell . . . . .	155
LES CONCOURS ARTISTIQUES 1949 . . . . .	156
PEGI NICOL MacLEOD 1904-1949 by Donald W. Buchanan . . . . .	158
NEW BUILDINGS ON DISPLAY by C. H. Scott . . . . .	163
LINOLEUM CARVING by Fritz Brandtner . . . . .	164
PAINTINGS FROM EAST AND WEST by C. H. Scott and Lucy Jarvis . . . . .	167
CANADIAN ARTISTS IN PARIS by Allan Harrison . . . . .	171
COAST TO COAST IN ART . . . . .	175
NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS . . . . .	181
THE ART FORUM . . . . .	189

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## The Canadian Film Awards

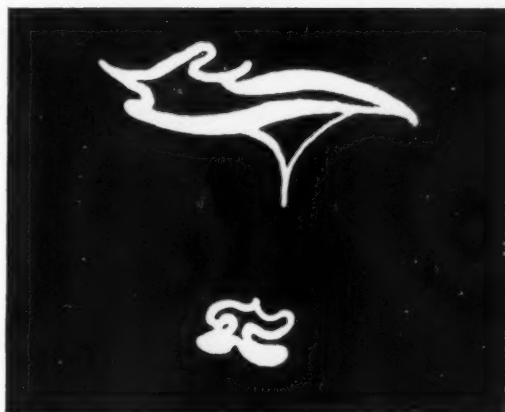
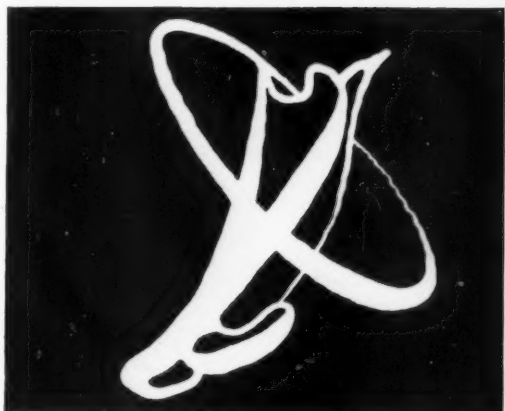
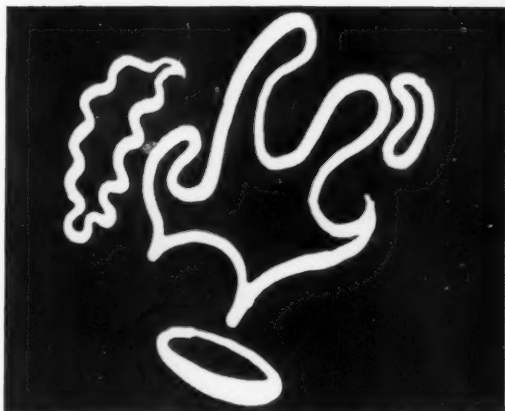
A FILM based on the use of West Coast Indian masks, obtained from the collection of the National Museum of Canada, has won first honours in the Canadian Film Awards for 1948. It is *The Loon's Necklace*, produced in colour by Crawley Films Limited of Ottawa. In this brilliant presentation of an old Indian legend, as narrated by Douglas Leechman, the masks, grotesque and sorrowful, savage and then strangely placid, are employed almost alone, without other aids, to tell the story. Sometimes one sees the figures of the anonymous actors who wear them, but at other times only the carved wooden visages themselves appear. These were ceremonial masks, used in ritual dances, ceremonies which we cannot hope to revive as historical documents on film today. Yet this motion picture, in its own and different way, does manage to bring out the full and expressive meaning of each of these masks, with, shall we say, almost as much visual impact upon the contemporary spectator as the aboriginal dances must have had upon the Indian watcher.

The film only falls short of perfection in a few passages where painted backgrounds, rather too obviously mannered in style, of wilderness landscapes, have been introduced. A most powerful effect results when the masks are left to make their impression simply without too great impediment from added accessories. Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Crawley and Grant Crabtree, all of whom worked on this film, are to be praised for the contribution they have made here to Canadian film production.

The Canadian Film Awards were developed by the Joint Planning Commission which represents fifty national organizations interested in education and the arts. The prizes consist of paintings by Canadian artists, and on this occasion were chosen by the recipients themselves.

Secondary awards were made in various categories. A number of young Canadian artists who work for the National Film Board, namely Jean-Paul Ladouceur, Alma Duncan, Ray Roy and Pierrette Pouaire, created what is the first animated film, using puppet figures and paper cut-outs for its entire action, ever to have been made in Canada. This is called *Chantons Noël* and it has as its musical theme a number of French

*Three frames from the experimental film Loops by Norman McLaren*







Norman McLaren demonstrates the technique of painting directly on film

carols. While it did not have anything like the concentrated and coherent make-believe of the earlier and more famous puppet films made in Europe by George Pal, *Chantons Noël*, nevertheless, had moments of great charm and originality. The puppets in this film, incidentally, are made not of wood but are formed out of paper. In general, the production was full of too unrelated a variety of graphic devices to be called excellent throughout, but it does pave the way towards an exciting new aspect of animated film-making in Canada. This film and one, *Time and Terrain*, done by Jim MacKay and Colin Low, won awards in the animated film category.

That unusual artist, Norman McLaren of Ottawa, who concentrates upon experiments in drawing directly upon film, submitted work to the judges that, although it did not fall strictly into any of the categories for which awards were being made, was yet considered to be such a contribution to film-making and to aesthetic studies generally, that his short productions, *Dots and Loops*, were given a special award. In these, he drew in his own sound track and thus created new sounds as well as abstract images related directly to these synthetic sounds.

"In other words," as McLaren has written, "no camera was used to photograph the image, nor microphone to record the sound. The picture was drawn frame by frame with pen and india ink on to clear 35 mm. movie celluloid, and the percussion noises were made in precisely the same way, by drawing small strokes and blobs on the side of the same bit of celluloid. Perhaps the most important point about this is that it demonstrates that one branch of movie-making at least can be free of the large financial and technical outlay usually connected with film production and brought down to the economic level on which the painter, sculptor and writer have traditionally worked."

Another special award was given to *Un Homme et Son Pêché*, a full length fictional film, adapted from the Quebec radio serial of the same name. This is a thoroughly Canadian film, in atmosphere, scenery, acting and story. Superb photography marks many of the sequences, and some of these, such as the one of the corn-husking party, are memorable. On the other hand the pace of the film is erratic and it does have some tedious moments. But the whole production, taken together, is a praiseworthy achievement. Paul L'Anglais of Quebec Productions was the producer and

the director was Richard Jarvis.

Of the various other motion pictures which received presentations, one singles out especially *Who Will Teach Your Child?* for the calm, unhurried, but thoroughly imaginative way in which its producer, Gudrun Parker, and its director, Stanley Jackson, introduced the varied problems of teaching, discipline and class-room environments in contemporary Canadian schools and of the relationship between parents and teachers. Then the *Feeling of Hostility*, one of a series of films on problems of human psychology, also produced by

and colours of the contemporary artist, can be immediately re-applied in understanding, and the pleasure they give teaches a great deal about the pleasure to be derived from art."

Full information about all these awards, only a brief mention of certain of which has been made here, can be obtained from the Canadian Association for Adult Education, 340 Jarvis Street, Toronto. Most of the films reviewed can be obtained either through your local film libraries, or if unavailable there, from the regional offices of the National Film Board, while if your local library does not

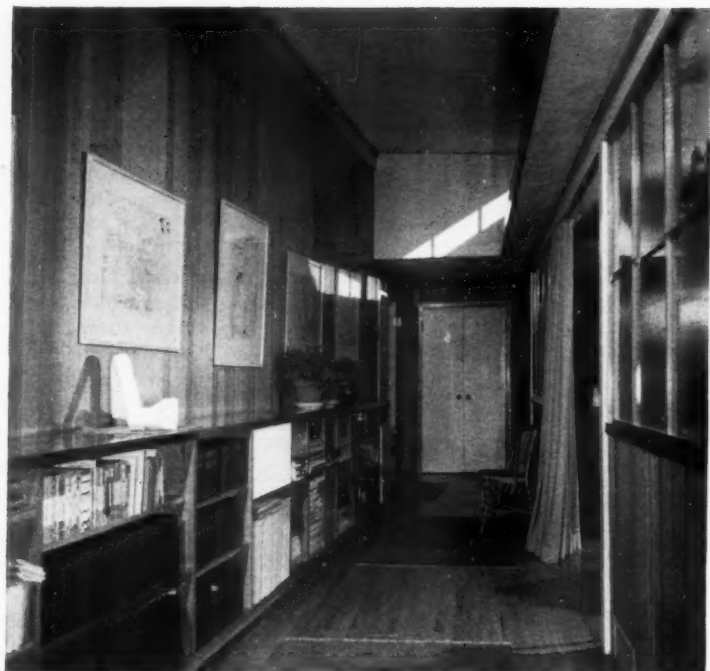


Indian masks from the film, "The Loon's Necklace"

the Film Board, must be cited for the integrity exercised by its director, Robert Anderson, in describing psychiatric knowledge and practice.

Several of these items have already received recognition abroad. *The Loon's Necklace* was shown at the Edinburgh Film Festival last year, and McLaren's experimental films and his abstract animated films such as *Fiddle-de-Dee* have received tributes from many critics elsewhere. For example, Robert Goldwater writing in the *American Magazine of Art* states that this latter film "is a minor work of art in its own right," and he adds that, "Its forms and colours, originating in the forms

have *The Loon's Necklace*, you should then write for further information concerning it to G. M. Moses, Public Relations, Imperial Oil Limited, Temperance Street, Toronto, which company has bought 60 prints of it for national distribution through the Canadian Education Association. A selected programme, comprising most of the winning films, has also been made up as a unit and is being distributed by The National Film Society of Canada, 172 Wellington Street, Ottawa, for the particular benefit of the over two hundred community film councils that now exist in Canada.

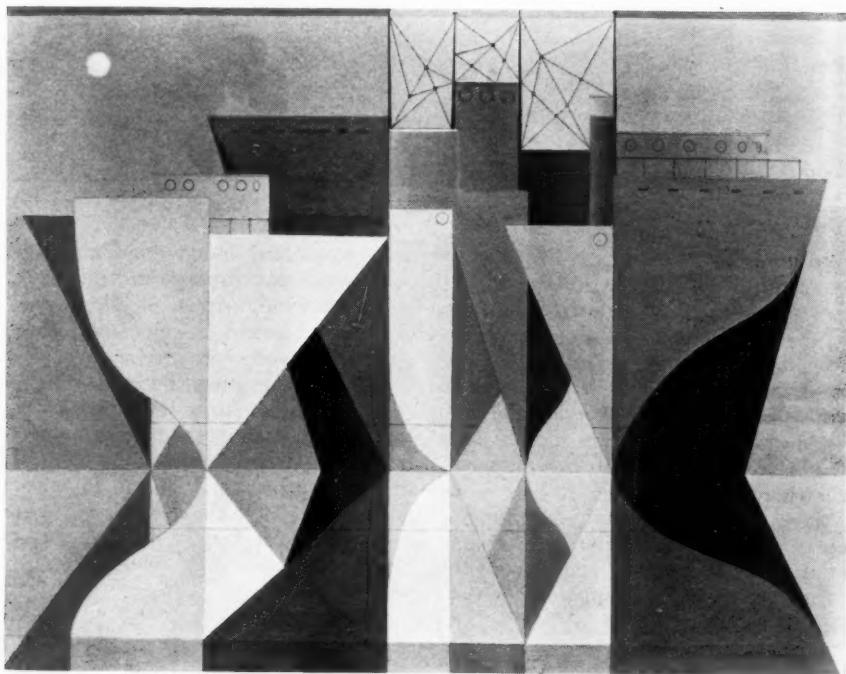


B. C. BINNING

*Combined library  
and passageway in  
the artist's house,  
built to his own designs*

*"...the discipline  
of architecture and  
its formal ideas..."*

B. C. BINNING. *Ships in Classical Calm*



## Exponent of a New Architecture in Paint

Too many Canadian artists, once they have obtained a certain facility of execution or have found some novel mode of expression, then proceed to stick too long with it. Afterwards, having exhausted the ore they are digging, they find themselves, in the end, left stranded with no new riches to mine and nothing to work on save the slag heaps of the past, which now lie piled up about them. It is good then to find a Vancouver artist, B. C. Binning, first shocking, then stimulating his admirers by the sudden and complete change he has made during one year in both his style and achievements.

Binning had until recently been noted almost entirely for his fine drawings of West Coast scenes. Mentioned had been their "psychological connotations", also the surface vitality given them by the repetitions of certain forms such as "flags, anchors, oars, driftwood and wiggling ropes." Others had noted how "his line now wanders with a delicate waywardness". All critics had stressed that he, alone among Canadian artists, was putting the full concentration of his expression into pen and ink drawing.

What a sudden transformation then to see him emerge now as the exponent and practitioner of a new architecture in paint! Gone are the wayward lines; all is now emphasis on surface textures in pigment and in abstraction of form. Yet he has not given up his old and constant love of row-boats, sailing sloops and dinghies. These, in a moving and changing panorama over the water, he watches daily along the waterfront beneath his home in West Vancouver. But it is the larger craft, the coastal vessels, which pass down the sound on their way to the various harbours and inlets of the mountainous west coast of British Columbia, or the liners and freighters, which move seawards to the Pacific and the Orient, that provide the imposing shapes and dimensions most suitable to his new interpretations. These paintings of ships are highly formalized; in the hulls and riggings he draws he creates a cool and almost mathematical balance between subtle curves and precise

straight lines.

Somewhat over a year ago, he took a sabbatical year from his teaching duties at the Vancouver School of Art. He had decided to make the jump from drawing to painting, and to use this time in which to effect the transition.



B. C. BINNING. *The White Ship*

"It was", he writes, "a year of revaluation and experiment, brooding, despair and in the end a small ray of hope: ten large canvases and a few small ones." He adds, "In looking at myself I saw with a certain amount of justification (because both my grandfathers were architects) a strong feeling toward those qualities known as 'architectural' in painting. This quality may have accentuated

itself, just then, because I was also designing and supervising the building of two houses.\* Whatever the reason, I began to feel greatly both the discipline of Architecture and its formal ideas, things like: the flat of the picture plane, the strong boundaries of the frame, the simple strength of the truly architectural form and its relating space, the contrasting play of line, the force of colour when freed from atmosphere and effect. Or perhaps it was the sudden realization of what can happen creatively when one frees not only colour, but form and everything else, from visual accident and recreates through the formal and architectural approach. Whatever it was, it hit me like a ton of very architectural bricks."

"Form and Idea", he goes on to explain, "must fuse", and his problem here has been to fuse the lyric idea, which was so present in the best of his earlier drawings, with these new architectural values. In his own way, he wanted to do what Seurat had done before him by other methods. In many ways, *Ships in Classical Calm* is one of the best of his new paintings. Interesting also is *The White Ship*, in which, despite its abstraction of forms, there remains a hint of his former "delicate waywardness" in drawing.

"You may ask now", he notes, "why ships? Being a seaside person, small boats, ships and things of the sea are old loves of mine—I know

\*He had previously built one for himself which had attracted nation-wide attention for its refined use of British Columbia fir and cedar for all exterior and interior construction and details and its straightforward architectural expression.

them well and I find them ready forms for interpretation. They can be lyric, no doubt about that, grand and elegant with dignity and power, or jolly and happy for joy. They abstract well. . ."

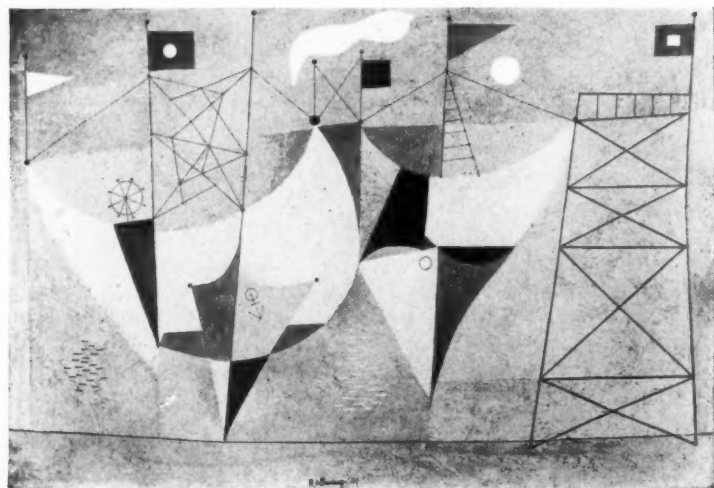
In *Small Boats Frolicking near a Blue Diving Tower*, he has come closest to retaining that spirit of joyousness that was so implicit in the finest of his earlier drawings. In this painting, done in 1949, he has gone back to the gentler aspect of the sheltered coves and away from the great, more dramatic ships of his first architectural arrangements. The background areas are blue and yellow greys, with noticeable qualities of texture in the pigment, while the triangles of the ships and flags are white or black or bright blues and reds.

"For me, at least", he explains, "it has some of that lovely feeling I get when I see boats bobbing and rolling to each other at anchor on a bright summer day with the sea running, and that is a joyous experience."

It is "this business of serious joy" that Binning thinks is neglected too much in Canadian painting. A fine expression of joy, in his opinion, can be and should be as significant a basis for serious art as are any of the sterner moods of life.

Binning feels that in his recent painting, he is getting at the essential by abstraction, whereas before he "played too much with the incidental, accidental and anecdotal". "Of future directions", he concludes, "one can only dream, and I dream of great, quiet, spatial ideas and rich colour and the sea and the coast."

D.W.B.



B. C. BINNING

*Small Boats  
Frolicking near  
a Blue Diving Tower*



*The Winnipeg  
Ballet in  
"Visages"*

*Masks and  
costumes by  
Dorothy Phillips*



## The Canadian Ballet Festival

GUY GLOVER

"A BALLET festival in Canada?" they said. "Impossible! . . . There was one in 1948, too? Must have been frightful! . . . The very idea of such a thing, at this stage in our cultural development, is ridiculous! . . . Why, even in the United States—" etc. Well, our cultural "wise-guys" were wrong, as usual.

Held in Toronto's fine old Royal Alexandra Theatre from March 1st to 5th, the 1949 Canadian Ballet Festival played to capacity audiences for six performances. Ten amateur dance groups, from six cities across the country, presented twenty dance works.

The job of organizing such an elaborate undertaking was handled expertly by a Toronto committee, and the festival was, therefore, an organizational and financial success of which all concerned can be proud. The quality of its artistic success I shall attempt to assess.

Ballet is a complex theatre art, being a synthesis of dancing, choreography (dance composition), music and décor. To the extent

that ballet uses drama, it has also its literary or thematic aspects. It is my intention to divide my remarks on the festival under some of the above categories.

### *Dancing*

The standard of dancing was surprisingly high in a country which has been noted for exporting its good dancers and keeping none for itself. The festival proved that there are quite a few good dancers still in the Dominion, and that all they need is an opportunity to dance.

It is clear, also, that in Ottawa, Toronto, Hamilton, Winnipeg and Vancouver, there are facilities for training which can teach ballet with an honest regard for the rigours of its style.

For all-round excellence, the Winnipeg Ballet displayed the best dancing, followed by the Volkoff Ballet, the Ottawa Ballet, and the Panto-Pacific Ballet of Vancouver—in more or less that order. But there were many talented dancers scattered throughout the other companies.

### Choreography

The Canadian choreographers, whose work was seen at the festival were, for the most part, composing for groups of relatively inexperienced dancers. They were limited, therefore, in the range of choreographic invention they could employ. Some of the compositions were, in fact, not much more than arrangements of the simpler classroom *enchainements*—and were dull and repetitive in effect.

The most integrated and sensitive choreography seen at the festival was undoubtedly Gweneth Lloyd's for the Winnipeg Ballet. With a strong and well-trained company, her work is better, and shown to better advantage, than ever before. In this connection, let us not forget that the choreographer is at the mercy of the technical proficiency of his company, and that with an indifferent company even the most considerable choreographic structure crumples to insignificance.

Miss Lloyd has been fortunate in having some of her dancers with her for a considerable time, and she has shown increasing ability to compose for their individual styles and limitations. In other words, she knows how to make the most of her material.

In addition, Miss Lloyd's choreographic idiom in itself has grown consistently richer. Three or four years ago her idiom was still too derivative—and derivative from dated models. At present, the derivative elements are somewhat more forward-looking and, at the same time, they bulk less. Her original contribution is beginning to make itself felt. What this will finally be, it is too early to venture.

Something, however, of what Miss Lloyd is attempting, can be suggested by taking note of her approach to dance technique, especially as demonstrated in her most recent ballet, *Visages*. Apparently she is tending to use an amalgam of straight ballet idiom and elements of a free-dance technique. This provides her with a flexible and expressive style, which adds eloquence to the upper torsos and arms (and hands) of her dancers, while preserving in them the strong dynamic of classic ballet.

Miss Lloyd's sense of character and sense of comedy (when these are required by her

theme) are the best I have seen in Canadian ballet. Her mime projects well, and is economical. This quality shows up notably in her *Finishing School*, a comedy work of great taste and charm. A third ballet, *Allegory*, I shall remark on later. But it was with *Visages*, set to an original score by Walter Kaufmann, that the Winnipeg choreographer displayed her most mature approach to ballet, and set a standard of excellence which no other festival ballet touched.

It would be ungracious in me not to mention, even if all too briefly, the work of two other choreographers. Nesta Toumine's reconstruction of *Les Sylphides* for the Ottawa Ballet was sensitive and right, preserving the style and atmosphere in what is a notoriously difficult ballet from just this point of view. Her second work, *Sonata*, was ambitious and impressive. Perhaps too advanced technically for the dancers of her company (who, nevertheless, by no means failed her), this work is an interesting fusion of the middle-period Massine style (Massine of the "symphonic ballets") and a severe classicism. Miss Toumine has obviously considerable talent for choreography—a talent which was one of the pleasant surprises of the festival.

Mara McBirney's choreography, for the Panto-Pacific Ballet of Vancouver, showed a firm grasp of style, and was designed with sweep and finish. The works entered in the festival, *Degas Rehearsal* and *Bohemian Revels*, gave little opportunity for wide emotional expression, so what Miss McBirney would do with more complex choreographic problems, I cannot say.

I must also mention the works of Ruth Sorel. This experienced artist of the theatre presented works of great interest, using, not ballet, but a "modern dance" idiom. (The presence, by the way, of her Montreal company, the Ruth Sorel Modern Dance Group, and the Neo-Dance Group of Toronto, both working in a non-balletic idiom suggests that the festival might more appropriately have been called "The Canadian Dance Festival".)

Miss Sorel danced the leading roles in her own ballets and danced them magnificently. Her choreographic invention was always theatrically striking—although analysis shows



it to be relatively simple in detail. What distinguishes her work throughout is its imaginative power and its sophistication—the latter a rare attribute in Canadian art.

Finally, some comment is required on a talented choreographer, whose work missed excellence through deficiencies in taste and comprehensive planning. I refer to Mr. Boris Volkoff, whose company appeared in three ballets of his composition, and in one adapted by him from a Fokine work.

Perhaps it is a matter of the choice of artistic collaborators—but whatever is wrong, Mr. Volkoff's choreography is served most indifferently by its stage surroundings. This is a great pity, for there is considerable choreographic interest in, for instance, his *Classical Symphony* and *The Magic Flute*.

What was obviously presented as his *pièce de résistance*, *The Red Ear of Corn* (with an interesting score by John Weinzweig), proved to be an unwieldy and disappointing essay on a Canadian theme. Conceived in two contrasting sections which never succeeded in building to an integrated whole, this ballet—with its full décor, its amorphous structure, its poor pacing and downright *longueurs*—did less than justice to its choreographer's ability. The score and the theme, with drastic cuts, might yet form the basis for a good

ballet, but Mr. Volkoff has work to do before this is achieved.

#### *Décor and Costumes*

I have suggested that there are more things about ballet than dancing, and that one of these is décor. How are Canadian groups handling this integral part of their art?

A ballet décor must provide an appropriate stage surrounding and create an appropriate atmosphere in which the choreographic design may unfold. This is more difficult than it appears. The difficulty lies in the fact that ballet décor has a static element (the "scenery") and a dynamic element (the costumes); and the costumes are in a dynamic relationship within themselves and with the scenery. The chief problem for the ballet designer is to create and control a balance between these two elements.

The designs for the average ballet demand further practical requirements. They must be relatively easy to execute and to put into place. They must not be too insistent and "drown" the dancing. The costumes must not impede the dancers' movements. The colour must be planned with a knowledge of what will happen to it under stage lights. All these are elementary.

To mount a ballet with even modest settings and costumes is an expensive business,

*The Ottawa Ballet  
in "Sonata"*

*Choreography  
by Nesta Toumine*

*Settings and  
costumes by  
S. Toumine*



which is likely to strain the financial resources of the amateur company. One could hardly expect the festival ballets, therefore, to display very elaborate décors.

Several companies, however, attempted quite ambitious effects. For example, *La Gaspésienne*, presented by the Sorel Modern Dance Group, had scenery and costumes by André Jasmin—the only Canadian painter of any reputation, by the way, to be represented at the festival. M. Jasmin's back-cloth and costumes were tasteful and reasonably appropriate—but hardly more than that. The folksy character of the theme and choreography suggested more vital pictorial elements than M. Jasmin provided. His décor was an example of over-prudence.

Another Sorel work, *Shakespearean Shadows*, had a setting and costumes by the veteran designer for the Ballets Russes, Mislav Dobujinsky. The costumes were some of the most imaginative and handsome I have seen in recent years, here or elsewhere. In this, and a third well-mounted work, *Mea Culpa*, the Sorel group showed what could be done when taste and experience are brought to bear on the problem of dance décor.

The Volkoff Ballet of Toronto, as I suggested earlier, showed what happens when taste and experience are lacking.

Not all the companies were as ambitious as the Montreal group, or as unsuccessful as the Volkoff group, in this matter. The Ottawa Ballet, for instance, had tasteful and simple scenery (back-drops and matching "borders") and excellent costumes. This young company, in fact, created a delightful visual impression. The Vancouver group had next to no scenery, but brought a sense of style to its costumes.

The Winnipeg Ballet, for the most part, met its art problems most intelligently. I say "for the most part", for the décor of its *Allegory* I find very hard to take—with the theme of the ballet "explained" by an over-explicit and fussy back-drop, with the costumes of the *corps de ballet* of an indeterminate badness, and with a costume for the leading male dancer which, for sheer unhappy inspiration, takes the booby prize. But for this décor (and but, perhaps, for a cer-

tain Binksian quality in the theme), *Allegory* would be a distinguished ballet. That is to say, danced in black practice-costume against a plain back-drop, it would appear, I should think, to an observer who knew nothing of its "programme", an interesting choreographic structure.

The décor of *Visages* was another matter. Probably the most striking décor to be seen at the festival, it had been most carefully and sensitively planned. The non-objective back-drop was discreetly painted, and created a suitable atmosphere. The costumes were striking in line and colour, and were well made. Masks also were used, and these were brilliantly designed and executed. Joseph Plaskett, the young Vancouver artist who is now in Winnipeg as acting head of the School of Art there, was responsible for the back-drop of *Visages*, and Dorothy Phillips for the costumes and masks. These artists know how to design for ballet, and Winnipeg should thank its lucky stars for them.

#### Conclusions

The idea of the Canadian Ballet Festival was certainly vindicated by the 1949 meeting. I have pointed out that I think its title might be changed, both to pay respects to a much abused terminology, and to indicate a wider range of dance interest.

It should be made clearer, I think, that the festival hopes to encourage not just *any* dancing, but the best amateur dancing from all parts of the country. This involves some application of standards. Encouragement should be given, too, to experiment in the field of theatrical dance. And in this, the festival must undertake to educate its public, by seeing that its (the public's) ideas of dancing are kept flexible and alive. Too many entries in this year's meeting seemed to have been chosen from the point of view of what the public expects of ballet. This, after all, in a country which sees little ballet, is likely to be a pretty tame objective. The festival, as one of the custodians of our ballet-conscience, must set higher sights.

As it points to a professional ballet in this country, the 1949 Festival was of special interest. It is now fairly clear that, if we could coax back the several notable Canadian

*Continued on page 180*

## An Exhibition of Canadian Sculpture

IT ISN'T easy in Canada to be a sculptor. Putting works in permanent material is costly and hard (satisfactory casting is not possible here) and, what is much worse, we lack any semblance of an interested public. As a result, few sculptors are able financially to give full time to their art.

The Sculptors' Society of Canada Exhibition, which opened at the Art Gallery of Toronto in April, is the first in several years. The general "feel" of the show was dull and depressing. There were too many mediocre heads, and there were no large works. Our sculptors sometimes complain that theirs is the Cinderella of the Canadian arts. Reflecting about this show there is a nasty temptation to retort that if *this* is what Cinderella looks like, it would be best that she stay at home.

But for two good reasons this approach would be quite wrong. The first is the already stated one: it is a wonder with the difficulties so big and disheartening we have any sculptors at all in Canada. More important still, there were a few contributions of genuine merit. What seemingly alone stays a full flowering of these important talents is that general state of Canadian apathy regarding sculpture.

Elford Cox, clearly one of the most promising of the younger sculptors, is well represented with an evocative and highly competent abstraction in cedar. Despite its non-objective character, this remains very much sculpture 'in the round' with the eye of one's mind carried on, and around, and about. Only in his feeling for the grain of the wood is the work not fully satisfying.

Sculpture of altogether another sort is a very lovely, larger than life-size, head by Frances Loring. The medium is butternut and the patina of the wood lends itself admirably to this strong and sensitive essay in character. Miss Loring is represented in addition with plaster models of her Bank of Montreal sculptures. These are competent, but, for me anyhow, lifeless and uninteresting. The large head on the other hand is something quite different. With it Miss Loring shows herself as one of the best of our sculptors.

Two contributions in the ceramic medium come off successfully. *The Roc* by Clivia Morrison is a stylized study of a young bird giving birth to himself! Her appreciation of her material is fine, and the result diverting, although perhaps a little too obviously modern American in influence. The clever social satires by Dora Wechsler are, of course, by now, pretty familiar to Canadians. Unfortunately only one is represented—*Equal Opportunities to All*. The title gives the clue to its message: huddled on a park bench are a group of oldish men, all seemingly unemployed and



FRANCES LORING. *Head*. Butternut



without hope. Technically and aesthetically it is, of its kind, an important small work.

The *Rivers of America*, eight modest wood carvings in sumac, by Florence Wyle are hard to describe. Each is a feminine form (or a part thereof!) and is intended to symbolize a large American river. The symbolism to me was rather far-fetched, but not so the delicacy and beauty of treatment. Every one in its own way is a gem, and Miss Wyle achieves a real *tour de force* in the manner in which she squeezes every ounce of nuance out of the wood graining.

It will be noted that none of these contributions mentioned are in the more heroic sculptural media of bronze or marble. The reason for this is clear. Until we Canadians become awakened to the importance of sculpture, our sculptors unhappily cannot afford to create works in those traditional and patently more satisfactory vehicles of expression.

ANDREW BELL

ELFORD COX. *Abstraction.* Cedar

### Les Concours Artistiques 1949

The annual artistic competitions, which have been staged since 1944 by the Provincial Secretary's Department of the Province of Quebec, were devoted this year to painting and sculpture. Last year the awards had been for sculpture and decorative arts, so it would appear that sculpture for the present at least is receiving some considerable encouragement in that province. Much different from the severe primitivism of Archambault's Head in bronze, which won the prize previously for sculpture, was Raymond Bégin's Tête de jeune Alfred, a solidly modelled head in plasticine, which gained the award this April. Mr. Bégin is a former pupil of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Quebec City. Another student of that same school, Jean-Paul Lacroix, won the second prize for sculpture.

Although a showing of her recent painting had been held last year at the Galerie Moribien in Paris, Simone Beaulieu, whose *Femme assise dans un paysage* was given the first award for painting, has up until now had few of her paintings exhibited in Canada. This is because, being the wife of a Canadian diplomat, she has lived mostly abroad during the past six years, with only rare visits home to Canada. In Paris, she came to know two modern masters of widely different expression, Fernand Léger and André Marchand, to whom she took her paintings regularly for inspection and comment.

The second prize in painting was awarded this time to Goodridge Roberts of Montreal for a still life. Known for many years as one of Quebec's most distinguished younger painters, it was fitting indeed that Roberts should have participated this year in the contest and have received one of the awards.



SIMONE BEAULIEU

*Femme assise  
dans un paysage*



RAYMOND BÉGIN

*Tête du jeune Alfred*

*Plasticine*





## Pegi Nicol MacLeod 1904-1949

DONALD  
W. BUCHANAN

PEGI NICOL MACLEOD  
*Self Portrait with Begonia*  
Collection: Norman MacLeod

SHE once wrote that to have one scene before her all day, whether it was her young daughter playing in the apartment, or the view of the bustling New York street beneath her windows, was to have it make such a tremendous impact upon her sensibilities that she had to paint it "or bust". She added, "To have it around all day removes perspective and I have kaleidoscope vision, but I must face it at last!" So housework had to be dropped, to "let myself go (thick paint and wild abandon) . . ."

Her exuberant personality dominated everything she did,—the work she put into trying to promote exhibitions of Canadian art in New York, the enthusiasm with which she followed each new aspect of her young daughter's school activities at Hunter College, the efforts she made when in New Brunswick to improve standards of handcraft design. Yet, pervading all these interests, was the great steady passion of her life, her painting. It became almost a painful and physical frustration to her if a day went by, when illness, housework or visitors prevented her from doing at least one water colour or oil sketch. But she loved people so, that she would want to see them when they called, even if this

meant asking her friends to come at times when she knew that this would entail giving up the few hours she had for creative work.

Pegi Nicol's career as an artist was a varied one. It had its early roots deep in Canadian traditions. She could write of the paintings of Tom Thomson and J. E. H. MacDonald, "I have grown up with this art", and add, "it means so much to us as to be part of our living spirit".

After studying under Franklin Brownell in Ottawa and at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Montreal, she began in the late nineteen twenties to do a few portrait studies and some strongly depicted realizations of Gatineau landscapes, one of the finest examples of which is *The Log Run* which won first prize for painting in the Willingdon Arts Competition in 1931.

About 1932-3, she, however, turned her talents towards a more expressionist description of city scenes and communal activities. Best, from this period, are her many sketches and paintings of children digging in the public school gardens across the street from her parents' home on Second Avenue in Ottawa. In these pictures, by the inter-relation of overlapping forms, by the mingling of sweep-

ing lines of figures with the rhythmic contours of garden plots, she was able to convey, in purely visual terms, the emotional impact and excitement of group activity.

This tendency became more evident in her later paintings of crowded street scenes, done first when she went in 1934 to work in Toronto and then afterwards when she lived in New York. But, there in New York, the actions and events she watched were so multitudinous, the sensations she obtained from

in trying to depict so much within the necessarily restricted limitations of easel painting. Some of her conceptions demanded rather the vast space of murals. Yet, remarkably enough, one sometimes comes across single water colours—for instance, the impression she did of jostling crowds before the giant Christmas tree in Rockefeller Plaza—which, in a small space, manage through subtle and brilliant colours and flowing line to give adequately to the spectator all she wanted to express of



PEGI NICOL MACLEOD. *The Log Run*

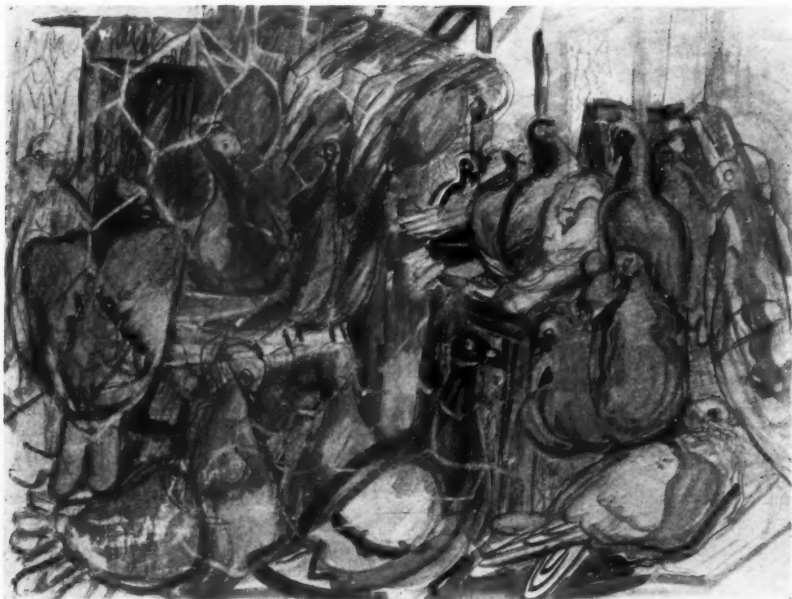
*Collection: Hon. Norman Lambert*

colour and motion so fluid and changing, that her own extreme sensitivity to all these stimuli proved at times almost her own undoing. She tried to put down on canvas and paper every aspect of the chaotic bustle that met her eyes from her windows on Eighty-Eighth Street; she wished to leave nothing out. As a result, in many of those pictures, the surface overflows with figures in motion, it is packed with now sinuous and graceful, now wavering and erratic, lines and shapes. She tackled, one would think, the impossible

humanity, in its variety, rising vigorous and triumphant over the mechanism of the metropolis.

From these struggles and experiments in New York, she garnered that experience of painting people in the mass, which served her in such good stead when, during the war, on the invitation of the National Gallery of Canada, she did in Ottawa a series of pictorial records of the Womens' Services. She portrayed these uniformed girls at work, in barracks, at rest or on parade, in water colours





PEGI NICOL  
MACLEOD

*Pigeons*

*Gouache*

and oils which are strongly evocative of the highly charged atmosphere of those war days.\* Describing the records she was asked to make of these women in uniform, she wrote: "Yet the pictures painted of them today are for their daughters also. . . . Being documents, being history, they should be done in terms that will be understood by their children."

There was one aesthetic conviction in particular which always guided her in her work. It was, as she stated, that, once a line was put down, it possessed an expressive reality in itself, and should never be changed. So she voiced her conviction to her friends, Marian Scott and Lillian Freiman, when they were students together at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Montreal, and this conviction she retained as she grew to maturity. This was part and parcel of that quality of spontaneity which was most typical to her, both as a human being and as a painter.

The medium most natural for the exercise of her talents was water colour, and in this she worked with great speed and concentration. She would take some favoured subject, such as the school gardens in Ottawa, and

within a few weeks she would have done dozens of studies and as many finished compositions on this one theme. Later she would go on to do oil sketches of the same scene on wooden panels, and finally larger oil compositions on canvas. But often she was less at home when working in oils, for this medium permits, even if it does not dictate, more forethought in planning and execution, than she was usually accustomed to allow herself.

She did not stop much to contemplate and construct. She rather rushed in with all her energy to do what her vision instinctively prompted. Yet, as she kept doing over and over again the same subject, these compositions, often at first loosely organized, would tend, as she worked on new variations, to become more unified and coherent in their elements. In this way, she did in New York, some time in the year preceding her death, a series of gouache and water colour studies of pigeons on roof tops, which grew progressively more sure and brilliant in lyrically composed patterns of shapes and colours, as the subject came to possess and control her imagination.

Even in those years when she was weighed down with the cares of housework and of the

\*A number of these are illustrated in *Canadian Art*, Vol. II, No. 2.

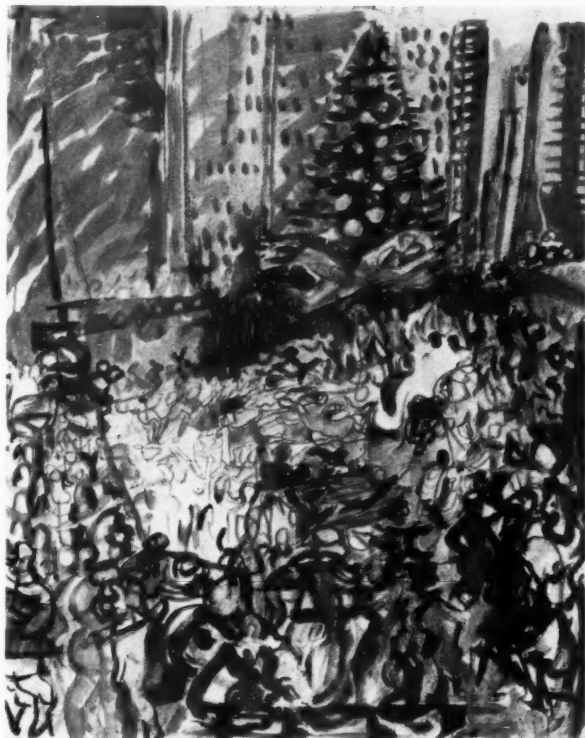
bringing up of a young child, she kept on painting daily. Not only that, but she was experimenting constantly with new media, new approaches. Although one can find elements here and there in her work which tend to bring to mind many of the great modern masters, as in those heavy patches of colour surrounded by emphatic strokes of pigment, which are reminiscent of Rouault, one would be wrong in seeking to imply any such direct derivations. These, and other notes of similarity in detail to some of the contemporary expressionist masters, were not obtained through imitation at all but rather by the action of a daring young mind which instinctively sought to adjust itself in painting to the spirit of the times. So much did she react to the changing tensions of our twentieth century world, to the moods and manners of life today, that she could never be quite content with what she had begun to accomplish, but had constantly to rush into still more intense forms of expression.

Now that she is gone, she will be missed most of all in Fredericton, where she conducted for many years the Observatory Summer School at the University of New Brunswick. Her influence as a teacher there was great, and her enthusiasm for promoting every aspect of Canadian art found widespread outlet in that province. At one period, she did murals for the Woodstock High School and then later she created some gentle but ingenious designs for the making of hooked rugs by Maritime farm women, which designs have since, some of them, been put into practical application. One of her friends has written that her coming each year to Fredericton always appeared to be a most important happening in her life. "Her little group of students, the life up the hill, the visits to the open-air market, to the Experimental Farm, the fresh colouring of the fields, all fascinated her and lured her back each year. Last year when Fredericton was celebrating its centennial, she worked slavishly till early morning

PEGI NICOL MACLEOD

*Skaters and Christmas Tree,  
Radio City*

*Water colour*



painting scenes for a university float—a tremendous bit of work. . . . She gave so freely. . . .”

Her long, intensely lived years in New York merely served to heighten her love for Canada and she talked before her death of the possibility of spending some extended period, even a complete year, in Fredericton or some other Canadian city, where she thought her culminating experiments might naturally unfold in a great blossoming of creative work.

What a tragedy then that Pegi Nicol was denied those final years of ultimate realization which should have been hers. She was only

45 years of age when she died, and the complete resolution of all her talents and experiments still lay before her. But what she had already done remains as a unique, a stimulating and a joyful contribution to Canadian art.

*A memorial exhibition of the works of Pegi Nicol MacLeod has been organized by the National Gallery of Canada. About ninety oils and water colours and studies in mixed mediums, drawn from all periods of her work, are included. The exhibition is being held in Ottawa during June and July and will be available for showing in other Canadian cities afterwards.*



PEGI NICOL MACLEOD. *School in a Garden*

## New Buildings on Display

THE first annual exhibition of architectural drawings, models, and photographs by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia was shown recently in the Vancouver Art Gallery.

The exhibition was significant on many counts. Chiefly it indicated that the architects plan an annual show. This in itself is a good thing, for it indicates that the architects are realizing that one way to the achievement of a city of fine buildings is by taking the public into their confidence. It lets John Citizen know that before a building is erected someone with knowledge and a trained sense of fitness has to plan it.

Vancouver, with its natural environment of close-up mountains, forest and sea, inclines its citizens to assume thereby that it is a beautiful city. A closer inspection of its buildings might lead him to shake off his illusion and get down to the business—the "good business" of erecting some man-made beauty worthy of the city's setting.

For nothing will add greater dignity to a city, or increase civic pride more, than fine architecture, no matter the setting—for good architecture bears its own beauty.

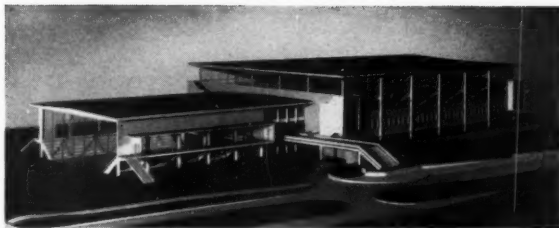
The exhibition was well planned and excellently displayed. It was also largely attended by a public which showed a lively interest in the many forms of architectural drawing.

This interest may appear surprising to some people, but surely an architect's drawing is no more difficult for the public to understand than is an abstract painting of which the public has some knowledge by now, and with which, the architect's drawing has much in common. Good architects and good abstract painters are much concerned with relationship of form and space; and the resultant aesthetic response to each art is similar.

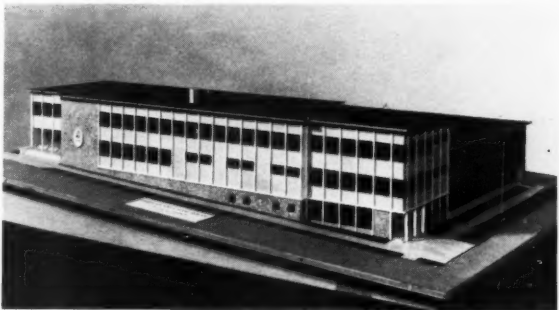
A feature of the exhibition was the number of beautifully constructed scale models of actual buildings, enabling one to see how different architects dealt with the same functional problem.

As might be expected in a city where the architectural front is changing rapidly, today's design emphasis is one of plain exterior surfaces relieved only by fenestration.

When surface decoration is out of fashion, as it is at present, the architect is called upon to create beauty by the significance of his architectural mass and by the relationship of the members to the mass; not an easy thing to do. When the architect fails to do so, the new building



*War Memorial Gymnasium and Swimming Pool, University of British Columbia. Sharp and Thompson, Berwick, Pratt, Architects. Fred Lasserre, Consultant Architect*



*Sacred Heart School, Vancouver  
Gardiner and Thornton, Architects*



*Small House Costing \$8,000, Vancouver  
Ross McKee, Architect*

becomes just one more undistinguished mass of wood or stone—no better, architecturally, than its old neighbour which carries poor surface decoration. No period of building is likely to be free of atrocities, but it is heartening to know that the Architectural Institute is prepared to take the field for the honour and dignity of a great and humanising profession.

C.H.S.

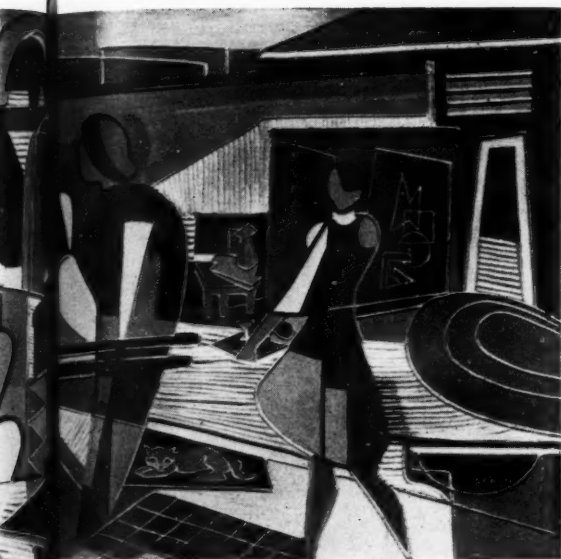


THE wonders of the black and white line can be brought out with exciting results in linoleum prints. Colour prints of great beauty also have been and are being produced daily by professional craftsmen. In some ways, linoleum used by artists for print-making has distinct advantages over wood or metal. It is not my intention, however, to elaborate on linoleum as a medium for print-making, as much has already been written about it.

But I believe very little is known about linoleum as used for carved decorations, plain or coloured. The desire of a few creative artists to experiment with this material has let them find in carved linoleum a new and excellent medium for direct expression. As a result, low-relief carvings of great beauty in design and texture have been produced.

Most of us, be we artists, craftsmen or laymen, have a desire to carve some day. But whenever the desire to do such a job becomes urgent, the problems of cost of wood, of suitable space in the home, and of difficulties in handling the material make most of us give up, and only the desire and the dream remain. But if one is unable to use wood, one can turn readily to linoleum. It is much cheaper than wood, and it is easier to handle. It does not need a special work-bench, any table will do, and

Lin



FRITZ BRANDTNER  
*Design for Living*  
 Low-relief lino carving

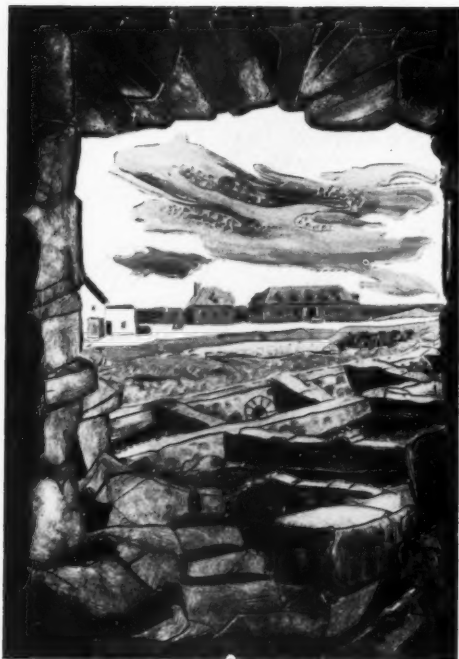
## Linoleum Carving

FRITZ BRANDTNER

FRITZ BRANDTNER  
*The Party*  
 Linocut







*Photo: Courtesy, Canadian National Railways*

**FRITZ BRANDTNER. Fort Louisburg**  
*Carved linoleum panel for railway dining car*

it can be had practically in any size, from small pieces, measured in inches, to large areas, measured in feet. It is true, that if one likes to do some carving in the round, linoleum is not suitable, but for low-relief carving it is an excellent material and the possible applications are surprisingly numerous. Decorations for boxes, furniture, doors, tiles, book-ends, and for walls offer a new field of great promise.

There are many ways to handle the carving. These vary according to the purpose and size of the work being done, and of the design and texture required. Small pieces, intended to be framed as decorations for walls, can be carved, painted and varnished, without the necessity of gluing any background support to them when finished. For larger pieces it is desirable and necessary to use a background of plywood glued firmly and accurately to the linoleum.

The cutting of linoleum does not offer too many difficulties. As long as one does not do

any undercutting, long life of the carved pieces will be assured. Since the requirements for carving panels are practically the same as for cutting linoleum blocks for printing, one can obtain the necessary technical advice on the use of knife, gouge and chisel, by reading books dealing with this subject. But the best teacher is, as usual, experience. One should practise with small pieces of linoleum and the kind of tools required. If a small piece is spoiled, the loss will not be very serious in either time or expense. Such experience is needed before going on to do larger and more important work.

As artists begin to grasp the possibilities of this type of low-relief carving, they should have no difficulty in turning out, with the help of architects and craftsmen, new work in this medium of outstanding character, aesthetic value and beauty. But there exists, as yet, no accepted standard of judgment as to what is work of high quality in this field.

Every material has its own unique qualities. Only when there is a clear relationship between material, design, technique and texture do we feel that the result we have achieved in our work is dynamic. The material has to have a chance to take part in shaping the idea. Linoleum is a synthetic material, it is man-made in contrast to wood which is an organic substance. As such, linoleum calls up ideas that lead us away from pure representation and towards the abstract. Therefore abstract qualities of design will give the greatest satisfaction, will bring an intense life of their own into linoleum carvings. This cannot be stressed too much, and artists and craftsmen, willing to use the material, in its new application, should do well to keep this always in mind.

The most fundamental development in this technique, of course, is the proposed use of linoleum for walls. It is surprising, therefore, to find that linoleum manufacturers have not encouraged artist and architect in their attempts to find new ways of using this material.

The combining of carved and painted surfaces in such dimensions as those offered us by complete walls will create new sensations of aesthetic enjoyment for the community as a whole, and give the artist new and unexpected opportunities for expressing his ideas about the world surrounding him.

LEROY ZWICKER

*Indian Harbour, N.S.*



## Paintings from East and West

*Last winter the Maritime Art Association co-operated with the Western Art Circuit in exchanging exhibitions. As a result, painters from East and West had a chance to take a good look at one another's work. The editors of this magazine have now asked Charles H. Scott, Director of the Vancouver School of Art, and Lucy Jarvis, Art Director, University of New Brunswick, to comment both on the success of this venture and on the paintings selected. We present first the article by Mr. Scott.*

THE Maritime Provinces and Western Canada have recently been looking at each other's art. That would appear to be good enough, but not content to leave it at that, a hardy spirit in each exhibiting group has been prevailed upon to write of what he sees in the works of the other. A dangerous task; for which one of these adventurous souls feels strangely wanting. Curiously enough, the felt "want" is concerned more with the physical or geographic background of the group of which he has to write, and less with any doubts as to what he might have to say of the group's work. I do not "know" the Maritimes, and I have met but one or two of its artists. True, I have embarked at Halifax, and debarked at Saint John; or was it the other way about. Anyhow, it was many years ago; during, and following the end of the first World War. My last recollection of the Maritimes is of being spewed out from a huge liner on to a dock in the harbour of Saint John, along with a few

thousand other returning Canadian soldiers. Most dock-sides look alike in the early morning,—so do most dishevelled soldiers when entrained within the confines of a crowded railway car. The picture was grey—and the greyness increased as the train made slow and punctuated progression through an uninviting and apparently sparsely inhabited landscape, more or less blanketed by rain and mist. Eventually, after what seemed like days of journeying, we reached civilization in Montreal. What I have learned of the Maritimes since then—and, I haste to add, it has been an entirely vicarious experience—has changed my grey picture to that of a colourful, vigorous and masculine landscape, inhabited by a people carrying traditions of hard work, austerity of living, scholarship and craftsmanship.

Now I am looking at their art and asking myself—in what terms do their artists speak of their country and of their people? Do they paint with the same forthrightness as their forefathers built

ships and ploughed lands?

At this point my pen falters—ignorance of terrain and people bids me tread cautiously—but I must go on without fear, favour, or prejudice. Travelling exhibitions of paintings strung together by committees are always difficult to assess. So often they seem not to represent the artist at his "high". Whether this is due to the difficulty of committee members arriving at a settlement, or to the artist's disinclination to allow his best works to travel hazardously for many months, I do not know. The show under criticism contains few, if any, outstanding works, yet there are many able and gifted artists represented. Jack Humphrey's contribution is a "sketch" which, while free and able, is not of the penetrable power we are accustomed to find in his work. Marjory MacIntyre's *Still Life with Fish* is a semi-abstraction of pleasant form and colour, but without the meaningful overtones which give deeper values to abstract painting.

It can be said that the majority of the artists know how to paint, but there is little evidence of a quickening sense of beauty breaking through their apparent competence. Consequently the quality of rhythm that results from an experience of beauty is lacking. This applies both to the realists and the abstractionists, and it is this lack which gives the exhibition its prosaic quality. There is little evidence of technical experimentation in the handling of paint.

This need not be reckoned a heavy loss; enough ways of handling have already been discovered to enable most artists to express what they have to say.

The most serious lack of experimentation however lies chiefly in the design of the painting. This, in turn, may be attributable to staleness of vision, for when the artist feels the impulse of a fresh vision, it usually calls forth a change in the mode of expression. The mode need not be a complete embracing of the latest "ism". It could, more naturally, be an extension of his visual experiences. Permutations and inventions in forms, colours, and textures hitherto unknown in his work, now become evident because of his new sense of beauty.

I am not bemoaning the lack of novelty—"novelties", as such, have no place in art.

Nor would I bemoan the lack of "maritism" in the paintings, although the absence of regional quality would suggest, that the Maritimes landscape is without character to the artist; a condition which I am not prepared to accept. I had hoped for more "tang and bite".

Perhaps the artists of the Maritimes, like their brothers in British Columbia, are, because of a more traditional background than that possessed by Ontario or the Prairie Provinces, more conservative in vision. If so, the sooner the cake is broken the better.

CHARLES H. SCOTT

JACK HUMPHREY. *Night*





L. O. LINDOE. *Rocks and Trees*. Water colour

## More Bark than Bite—Notes from a Critic's Journal

**Fredericton, Tuesday**—The Western Exhibition is to be taken from its efficient packing boxes, tomorrow, which is an exciting thought to this reviewer, who believes that art is an imaginative expression inevitably qualified by the geographical and social environment of the artist's life. What other belief could be the incentive for an exchange of work between two diverse areas of a nation?

Many Maritimers, including the writer, have never visited the Western provinces or previously seen an exhibition of purely Western Canadian art. However, the Maritime imagination, stimulated by song, and the old slogan "Go West, young man", tells us that the mountains are high, the prairies are vast and the wind blows free.

We expect a lot.

**Wednesday**—Still in yesterday's attitude, we visit the exhibition and pause at the threshold for the impact of the first impression.

Very professional, we think, but feel a little frightened. (All Maritimers may not be so timid in the presence of the competent.) Suppressing this sensation, we wandered from canvas to canvas with a growing incredulity, and as is so often the case with timid souls, we ourselves became the victim of an urge to be self-assertive.

And why pretend?

Surely our Western brothers will be pleased to know that we are not fooled. The thing we were looking for must be out in the West there somewhere. After all, we read this magazine

and even in this supposedly remote part of the country, the news of Lawren Harris's recent work has made such canvases of his as *After Rain in the Mountains* and *House in Winter* seem like rather more than twice-told tales. The first has for some time been well known to us through reproduction and the second says the same thing about a much less interesting subject.

Having discovered that the exhibition as a whole has more bark than bite, with the possible exception of W. P. Weston's two pictures *Castor Oil Plant* and *Afternoon, Slocan Lake*, we become conscious of a group of canvases competently painted in safe neutrals.

Safe neutrals from the West! Imagine that!

J. B. Taylor's *Peasant Woman* leads in portraiture and picturesqueness. Here the neutrals give birth to a few jewel-like touches of colour on the edge of a kerchief. The grand and ample figure is vignettted into its rectangle as well as could be expected on a canvas of that shape.

The *Accordion Player* by C. H. Scott seems to have fallen into the category of neutrals by mistake. Accordion players in the East are very stimulating—perhaps the model did not even play one little tune while posing—too bad. Such are our thoughts in the presence of this picture with the perfect surface tonality and faultless craftsmanship.

H. G. Glyde's portrait of Mr. H. Greenfield is even more neutral but possibly with more reason, such as a desire to have it hold its decorative place on the walls of a business office.

In a more geometric group of canvases, the neutrals find an antidote in George Swinton's *Composition on Procrastination* which, in rich red, black and pale yellow, showed an expressive organization of space and values.

Bill Perehudoff's *Elevators* is a subject typical of the West presented in a creative manner. Jack Markell's *Abstract* is a fantastic dance of shapes, mostly black, on a rich gold background.

Very spontaneous in expression seems Janet Mitchell's *Carnival*. In this picture, against a twirling background of deep grays and blues, a crowd of upturned faces watch a side show. The crude colour of the pavilion and banner, which, along with the lighted faces of the watching crowd, formed the simple but effective pattern, may have been deliberate. A little breeze from the West seems to fan our cheeks.

*Spruce Glade* by D. S. Kirkland presents a clever manipulation of tree structure, as does *The Glade* by F. D. Motter.

Two more loosely painted canvases are Margaret Chappelle's *The City at Night* and C. S. Warren's *In the Shadow of the Cathedral*. It is noticeable that the entries by women display more freedom in the use of wash and paint. One senses a personality behind their efforts. This is true in a lesser degree of Ruth Haley's *Leach Lake*. This canvas achieves a luminosity which inclines one to class it with the water colours.

A smaller canvas, *Snow, Saskatchewan*, by Antonia Eastman, has achieved real unity. It is an honest little canvas that everyone likes. It represents a dismal little suburban vista, but the brightness of light on the snow and the lively little figure that seems to sport in it, leaves one with a sense of well-being.

**Thursday**—We return today to study the water colours. With the exception of L. O. Lindoe's *Rocks and Trees*, they seemed to this spectator to be as equally lacking in imaginative expression as the oils. The style of expression in Lindoe's picture, though not unfamiliar to us, gives his painting a lyric content that lifts our spirits. It is a picture we would like to own.

*The Market Scene* by Alison Newton has great charm from an illustrative point of view.

C. S. Ashmore's *Jasper Highway* might have come from the portfolio of one of our itinerant dealers in water colours from the Old Country, except for the lack of sheep and purple heather and the application of a well known archetype of evergreen trees. This thought applies to other pictures in the exhibition, including Jean Eydon's *House at Point Douglas* (which nevertheless is no rose-covered cottage), and Donald Smith's

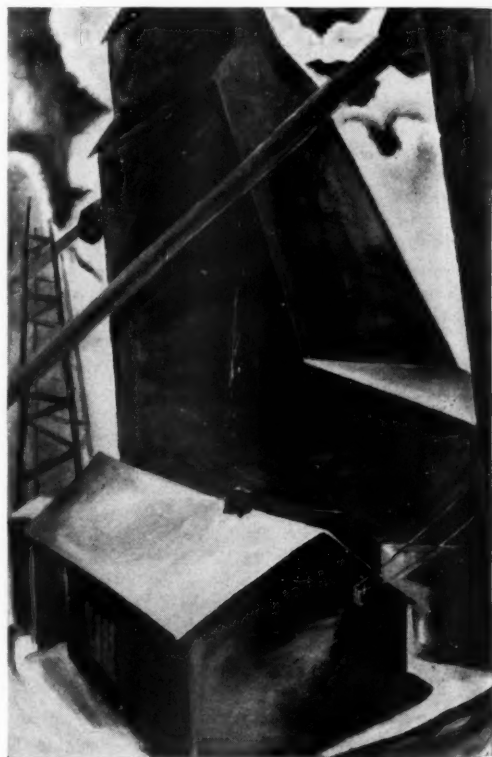
*Aftermath of Battle* which achieves the granular effect that the books on water colour painting say is so difficult to get.

O. N. Fisher's *Snow and Scrap* and *Study in Red and Green*—studies of industrial subjects—seem to transcend an effort to please and to be frank experiments in expression.

Such are a Maritimer's reactions to this exhibition, although some thought less of it, and some more.

Was this reviewer perhaps wrong in making, at the beginning of this review, such an enthusiastic assessment of the incentive behind this exhibition? Perhaps so. To begin with, no doubt artists hesitate to send their best work on such a long and hazardous trip. And perhaps our own exchange presentations from the Maritimes have not been of such a high standard as to impress the West Coast into thinking that we are worthy of more.

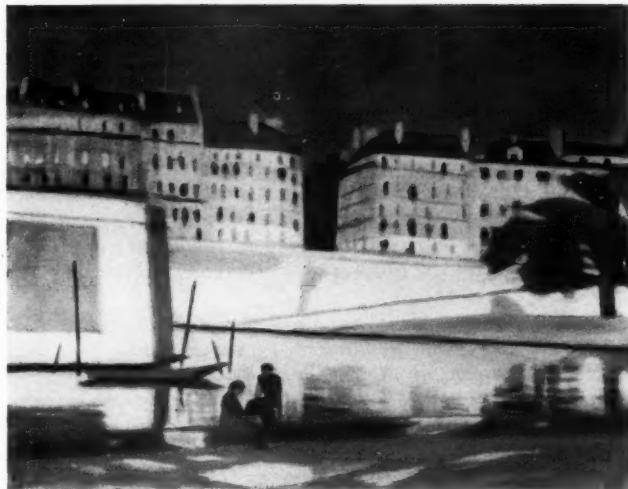
BILL PEREHUDOFF. *Elevators*





ALLAN HARRISON

*The Seine*



## Canadian Artists in Paris

About thirty Canadian artists and art students are now in Paris and they do not seem to be lost at all amidst the varied schools and movements and aesthetic distractions which so characterize the life of that city. Many of them seem to know exactly where they are going. A few of them are, in fact, so certain of which of the better known masters can give them the advice they want that they do not bother to attend the more popular studios and academies but instead have made arrangements for private tuition with such distinguished artists as André Marchand, Fernand Léger and Georges Rouault.

Harry Kelman, who went over originally on a Department of Veterans' Affairs grant, has become such an earnest seeker after the finer things in painting that he has become acquainted with the great Rouault, and is now presenting his work fairly regularly to that master for review and comment. One of the latest Canadians to arrive in Paris, Denyse Gadbois, is receiving some instruction from Marchand, the artist who was once a disciple of Matisse and whose paintings and tapestries have attracted much well deserved praise in recent years; while Louis Abramovitch, also from Montreal, has been going to Léger, to receive criticism and some tuition from this master in the Cubist tradition.

For those Canadians who have not reached this stage of advanced work, La Grande Chaumière and the Académie Julian seem to have proved the most attractive studios in which to work.

Some of the artists now there went over on veterans' grants, three or four are on Quebec government scholarships and perhaps about six or eight now hold, or did hold, French government scholarships. For example, Peter Sager, the sculptor and print-maker from Ottawa, having finished the tenure of his French government scholarship, has managed to finance a further sojourn abroad by means of sales he is making of his own work in Europe. Also Pierre de Ligny Boudreau, who won the "Grand Prix de la Province de Québec" in 1945 and who went to France on a D.V.A. grant, has stayed on in Paris and is now selling a few of his paintings there. He has also attracted favourable official attention, and, as a result, has now gone to Morocco to paint for three months at the invitation of the French government. Much of his work is in a decorative style reminiscent of Dufy.



*The works of Jean-Paul Riopelle of the Automatist group of French-Canadian painters, which were described in Canadian Art, Vol. V, No. 3, were on view this April at the Galerie La Dragonne in Paris. He was honoured with a catalogue containing an introduction written in part by the poet, painter and critic, André Breton, who was one of the founders of the surrealist movement.*

*The average American student frequents all too closely those cafés and bars along the Boulevard Montparnasse, which famous as they may be, still make up only the vague surface fringe of artistic life in Paris. The Canadians, however, appear to take much less interest in these more superficial aspects of la vie bohème. They also keep to some degree in fairly constant touch with one another; many of them can usually be found at one or two small cafés, usually on or near the Boulevard St.-Germain, which they tend to make into meeting places of their own.*

*On an official level, contemporary Canadian art, however, has not been given much publicity or any real recognition, as yet, in Paris. This, nevertheless, is through no fault of trying on the part of M. A. Couturier. This Dominican, who did so much, when living in Montreal, to encourage new and vital movements in art, returned to France a few years ago. He at once proceeded to make arrangements for a showing of contemporary Canadian painting, to be staged at the Musée de l'Art Moderne in Paris. Although the selection of the works to be hung was left entirely in his hands, the proposed exhibition was to have been an official one sponsored by the French State. These plans, however, fell through at the last minute, when, because of the wave of strikes that swept France at that time, certain Montreal artists became fearful of shipping their pictures, so the exhibition, shortly before its scheduled opening, had to be cancelled. The collapse of this project does not mean, however, that Canadian art need be neglected in Paris. A similar exhibition could doubtless still be arranged, provided more stable backing from Canada could now be given Father Couturier in his efforts. This highly cultured man is exceedingly prominent in art circles in France today. For example, he has been instrumental in persuading Henri Matisse to become the decorator and designer of the chapel at Vence in Provence about which so much is now being written.*

*Life in Paris today, as one Canadian artist has seen it, is described in the following notes which Allan Harrison of Montreal, has sent us. Harrison, after a year in Rio de Janeiro, where he knew Candido Portinari, recently made his eighth visit to Paris and spent some time also in Rome before returning to Montreal.*

**T**HOUGH some may have come to doubt it, Paris remains today the art capital of the world, the capital of the artist's universe, the city to which creative minds everywhere continue to turn in affection and in admiration. The artist from New York, from Montreal, from Rio de Janeiro, from London and Stockholm and from Rome and Prague dreams of the day when he will for the first time, or for the fifth time, arrive in Paris. My recent sojourn there and in other world capitals made this clear to me.

Paris offers much to the artist for it is the cradle of the modern renaissance in painting and in sculpture.

Life constantly changes and with it we change, cities change, ideas and beliefs change. For the Frenchman and Parisian life is difficult, much more so today than before. Milk is rationed, salaries are low and now and then a strike on the Métro makes him wonder if it isn't all sort

of an endurance test, for very possibly his wife too is working somewhere to make ends meet. But Paris is his city and life must be lived. For what is lacking he will fight and struggle. Probably no city in the world is more beloved by its inhabitants. For the painter and sculptor however, Paris has retained most of its interest — its museums, the bookstalls on the Seine, the broad boulevards and the narrow streets. Most foreign artists and students arrive mentally, if not actually, counting their francs even as they leave the Gare St.-Lazare for some small hotel, wondering if they will be able to stay a month, three months or six. Although it is not a great deal to someone employed in America, they will need at least eighty to one hundred dollars (official rates) a month to room, to eat and to spend at least the morning session studying somewhere. Still, the money will go further than it would at home.

Paris seems to worry less about changes in art philosophy than does America. The dominant philosophy is still the "art-for-art's-sake" one and social change of our day seems to leave little reflection in the work of Parisian or French painters. This I neither praise nor condemn. One thing is certain, Paris still offers the largest single group of sensitive and skilled painters in the world. Not all the contemporary French painters are convinced of the strictly contemporary nature of the content of their art. Many feel they are in a sort of *cul-de-sac* out of which they must find their way.

One goes to Paris for what it offers freely, cultural life and the development of creative personality. Enrolment in an *académie* or in the classes of some given painter will start the student off. Many good painters of varying tendencies are teaching: André Planson at the Académie Julian, on the rue du Dragon; André Lhote at his studios in the rue Odessa; Souverbie at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. There are also the Académies Colarossi and Grande Chaumière in the rue de la Grande Chaumière, and nearby Ossip Zadkine is teaching sculpture. In any of these classes you will soon make friends.

But the schools and the exchanges of ideas that you will make in them are only a part of the learning that you will acquire. The museums abound. The impressionists and the post-impressionists are to be found at the Jeu de Paume museum in the neighbouring Tuilleries. The Italian and French masters remain at the Louvre. The Musée de l'Orangerie, also in the Tuilleries, houses passing shows sponsored by the State. During the past fifteen months major exhibitions of Pierre Bonnard, Albert Marquet and others have been held there. Further along the Seine on the Quai New York is the Musée d'Art Moderne which houses the work of purely contemporary painters from the great Matisse and Picasso to the lesser known, such as Pignon, Fougerson, and Desnoyer. There is also sculpture there by Maillo and others. Both the Orangerie and the Musée d'Art Moderne hold special exhibitions from time to time and last year saw two very good shows, of Paul Klee and of Marc Chagall. Close by is the Musée des Fresques where excellent copies of famous frescoes are to be seen placed in reconstructions of their original surroundings. Closer to the heart of the city is the Petit Palais where the magnificent collections of the Museums of Vienna and of Munich were exhibited last year.

Running through the Latin Quarter is the Boulevard St.-Germain where is found the church

of St. Germain-des-Près, perhaps the hub of the quarter—with the Café des Deux Magots and the Café Flore just on the next corner. The Flore seems to have taken over the popularity once enjoyed by the Dôme, by the Coupole and the Deux Magots. At the Flore, the downstairs is most popular with the Americans, English and other foreigners, but just wander upstairs if you wish to meet the young French—corduroy suits, foulards and arty girl friends, avidly discussing Sartre, existentialism and busy erecting, destroying and resurrecting new and past economic systems. Here the cult of the "individual" meets its stoutest champions, even if you've heard it all before back in Greenwich Village. Yes, even this is a page in an artist's life, but Paris has more than this to offer. Before leaving the district though, Raffy's is close by in the rue du Dragon and there you can eat for less than a dollar and you'll meet many of your artist friends.

Of the contemporary Parisian painters I can say but little, there are so many. Of course the Parisian is accustomed to the excellence of the great established masters, Matisse, Bonnard, Braque, Picasso and others, but there are a good many painters less known to the general public,

PIERRE DE LIGNY BOUDREAU. *Portrait*



who are of merit. Many exhibitions of painters of worth, but who are less renowned, draw crowds. The exhibition of Bela Czobel in the Faubourg-St.-Honoré last year showed him to be a painter of quality and profundity and his large collection of drawings showed his genuine sensitivity and accomplishment. Although Hungarian by birth, I would call him Parisian by virtue of residence. The painters Pignon and Fougéron are perhaps the best known of the younger generation of semi-abstract painters. Everyone knows the work of the contemporary masters, so keen interest of a special kind is shown in the work of the newer painters and they are legion. Here are some names, to mention only a few: François Desnoyer, Estève, Borès, Arpad Szenes, Maria Helena da Silva. There is also the annual exhibition of the *Sur-indépendants* which was immense in 1948 and even included some Canadians resident in Paris.

Canadians in Paris? Yes, there are quite a number, too great to enumerate, and many students of painting. One of the best known and universally liked is Jean Soucy of Quebec. Close to the Place Clichy live Harry Kelman of Ottawa and Bud Crosthwaite of Montreal. Charles Daudelin, Jeanne Rhéaume, Jean Boggs, Anita

Elkin, Robert Bolduc, and Toby Davis of Montreal were all to be seen in the *Quartier* during 1948. Most go their own way for art views are as divergent among Canadians as amongst others. At this point I recall a young "abstract" Canadian painter telling me that "Degas couldn't draw"—(I forgot to ask him how he found him as a ballet dancer). Of contemporary Canadian artists perhaps the best known is Alfred Pellan for he lived in Paris many years and enjoys quite a reputation among the good younger generation painters. Life, as a student in Paris, can be restricted at times for you will not find yourself often in French homes, whether or not you speak French, and life will be a round of rooms, restaurants and *bistros*, but it all makes for a good Parisian background.

Those who claim that Paris has been replaced as an art centre would do well to reflect, for to replace it, you must first find its equivalent. I believe for you will not find yourself often in the average young artist's dream of a visit to Paris. It will give him or her confidence in years to come for he will have seen much of the best of art, and witnessed the life of artists in a city where they are respected as an integral part of the community.

ALLAN HARRISON

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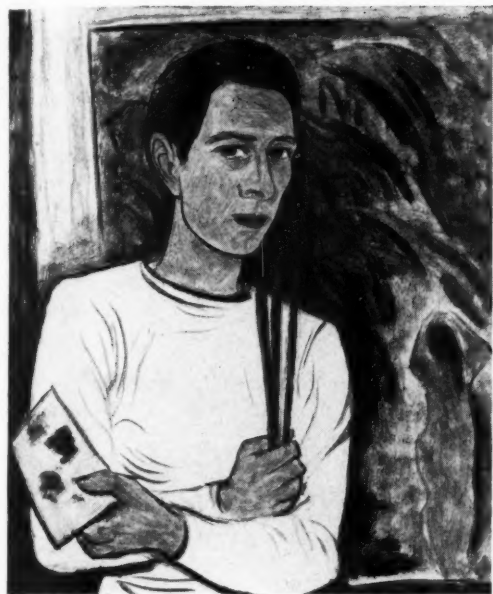
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*Courtesy: Dominion Gallery*

## COAST TO COAST IN ART

STANLEY COSGROVE

*Self portrait*

### **Answering Questions About Child Art**

With the new curriculum for Saskatchewan primary school training providing for eight per cent of the teaching time to be devoted to creative art, this being the same number of hours, for example, as is spent on arithmetic, there has been a great increase in the number of questions being asked teachers by parents about the art classes and of the part their children play in them.

In an attempt to answer these questions and to help parents understand how important it is to encourage free expression in child art, Mrs. M. F. Eason, who has been in charge of these classes at Buena Vista School in Saskatoon for the past six years, decided this spring to put on a special educational display for parents in the new children's gallery of that school.

Her presentation differed from the usual run of child art exhibitions in that it not only showed what the children were doing, but also set out to explain what are the different emotional and visual approaches which can be expected from children as they pass from the almost geometric symbols used by six year-olds to represent objects to the developing sense of natural form shown by eight year-olds.

In addition, detailed description was given of teaching methods; how, on certain days, children

were encouraged to paint whatever they like, while on other days the teacher gave them suggestions as to what to paint, for instance by describing a walk through the city streets, or by playing music and asking them to reproduce the ideas the music called up.

### **Stanley Cosgrove**

Without mentioning him by name, a columnist of one of Montreal's suburban weeklies mauled Stanley Cosgrove at length when his exhibition was being held at the Dominion Gallery in April. The critic would have been more alarmed if he had known that the National Gallery owns four paintings by Cosgrove and that others have been acquired by the Art Gallery of Toronto, by Hart House and by several collectors usually known as discerning.

Speaking of a still life he saw in the shop window—he didn't dare go inside—the columnist said: "It was the type of picture which, if hung in your living-room, would cause your friends to ask if your eight-year-old daughter had done it." Was such art, he asked, "worthy of serious attention by people of a logical and direct turn of mind, or is it just a screwball pastime for arty eccentrics? What is the value of a picture which the average intelligent man can't decipher, can't even tell which is the top and which the bottom?"

What is the appeal of a picture which shows crudely drawn apples and oranges piled in impossible fashion, completely ignoring the force of gravity?"

If there is any Canadian painter today to whom such abuse is not applicable, it is Stanley Cosgrove. No "wordy abstruse phrases" are needed to defend him. He needs no defence. As the exhibition showed, in landscapes, figures and still lifes, he is a painter of great integrity and modesty, a painter with such a deep understanding of the subtle relationships of not only colours but forms that he can take liberties with so-called natural appearances and out of his inner vision and his experience create something new and valid and profoundly satisfying.

While his still lifes had previously been better known, this exhibition also proved that Cosgrove was almost equally at home in creating, within a brief range of muted colours, certain almost classically composed paintings of forest and woodland subjects, based on brief notes and pencil sketches he had made during summer vacations in the Quebec countryside.

#### **Two Hundred Years of Art in Nova Scotia**

Halifax, Nova Scotia, celebrates its two hundredth anniversary this year. For this occasion, what promises to be an art exhibition of more than usual interest is being assembled by a committee representative of the Nova Scotia College of Art, the Nova Scotia Museum of Fine Arts, the Nova Scotia Society of Artists and Dalhousie University. This will open in mid-July, so that it can be readily viewed by the many holiday visitors who are expected in Nova Scotia this summer.

The place of showing will be the Queen Elizabeth High School. Artists have been busy in Halifax almost from the year of its foundation up to the present, and most famous Canadian artists have painted there at some time. The National Gallery of Canada and other galleries, many private owners and artists have agreed to send important loans to this exhibition which will reach a high level of artistic achievement and at the same time present a commentary on the changing scene over the generations in the city, its surroundings and its inhabitants.

#### **From Manet to Matisse**

The development of modern French art during the past seventy years is now clearly explained to Canadian museum-goers by means of an important collection of paintings, being shown at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, under the



PAUL GAUGUIN. *Bonjour, Monsieur Gauguin*

Collection: Ivan N. Podgoursky

title "From Manet to Matisse". This exhibition will continue until June 26th.

By studying the forty or so works on view by 25 artists, we can see how rich has been the growth and how profound the coherence of this great tradition in painting as it has moved onwards from Manet and the impressionists, through Renoir, Cézanne and the post-impressionists, to the men of our day, Dufy, Braque, Rouault, Picasso and Matisse.

Of special interest in this loan collection are several works, never previously or only rarely before seen on this continent, such as *Bonjour, Monsieur Gauguin* by Gauguin, *Coastal Landscape* by Seurat, *The Football Player* by Henri Rousseau and *D'Après Renoir* by Dufy.

#### **Creating a Link Between Artists and Advertisers**

Formed last year by a group of art directors and designers in Toronto, who were anxious to improve the standards of advertising and editorial art in Canada, the Art Directors Club of Toronto this spring prepared and presented an important national exhibition of selected Canadian



examples of graphic design in magazine, newspaper and poster advertising. All works displayed in the show, which was held in Toronto this April, will be reproduced in a Canadian Art Directors Annual of about one hundred pages which will appear in September and will cost \$4.00. Secretary of the Club is O. K. Shenck, c/o Cockfield, Brown & Co. Ltd., Toronto.

Other activities include each year the holding of several meetings, open to the public, addressed by prominent commercial designers. Membership in the club is now close to fifty.

In the first annual exhibition, awards were given in about ten different categories ranging from display advertising to various types of illustrations and magazine covers. Although many of the examples shown were of considerable merit and originality, the exhibition, however, demonstrated that we do not yet have any very high average of commercial design in this country. The club, nevertheless, hopes that its system of awards will encourage both buyers and agencies to give more thought to good design.

#### Quebec to See Famous Private Collection

One of the best private collections on this continent of French painting, of the period since 1870, is owned by the New York banker, Maurice Wertheim. Shown only once before at the Fogg Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, this collection will now be on view this summer at the Provincial Museum in Quebec City. Mr. Wertheim spends his summers in that province, and it was through this interest of his in Quebec, that he was persuaded to lend his paintings to the museum for the month of July.

Names of some of the artists included, such as Cézanne, Degas, Monet, Seurat, Toulouse-Lautrec, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Pissarro, Picasso, Matisse, Dufy, Manet and Renoir, give proof of the importance of the collection.

Among the masterpieces are *Self Portrait* by Van Gogh, *Gare Saint Lazare* by Monet, *The Rehearsal* by Degas, *Poèmes Barbares* by Gauguin, and *Nature Morte à la Commode* by Cézanne. Also a fine painting, once in Canadian hands, *La Burceuse* by Toulouse-Lautrec, was recently purchased by Mr. Wertheim. This was formerly in the Van Horne collection of Montreal and was illustrated in the article "Lost to Canada" in *Canadian Art*, Vol. III, No. 3.

Cover design by Harold Town, artist, and Stanley Furnival, art director

Awarded a gold medal for cover illustration by the Art Directors Club of Toronto, 1949

#### Paul-Emile Borduas wins a First Prize at Spring Exhibition in Montreal

Even the most casual spectator, this year, would have had little trouble in telling which rooms of the annual Spring Exhibition, held at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, were devoted respectively to "academic" art and to "modern" painting. This was because Jury II (the "modern" jury, under the two jury system in force), had accepted for hanging a number of both experimental and controversial works done by members of the "automatist" group of French-Canadian painters.

These non-representational compositions, orderless and meaningless to many, but arousing fierce praise and partizanship from their supporters, did definitely attract attention and were each day surrounded by argumentative groups of visitors. One can disagree with the merits of some of these offerings, but yet certainly the painting sent in by Paul-Emile Borduas, entitled *Réunions des Trophées*, which won the Jessie Dow Award for an oil painting, was a masterpiece of its kind. Completely non-representational, it was yet far from cold and mathematical; it was abstraction that was both lyrical and moving in the rhythms and intricate balance of its forms.





In the same room, but absolutely dissimilar from the work of the "automatists", were pictures by Ghitta Caiserman and Betty Sutherland, depicting slum children in tattered alley-ways. Goodridge Roberts and Stanley Cosgrove, as usual, had fine paintings on view, while two younger artists, Jeanne Rheume and William Armstrong, showed increasing signs of maturity and sureness of direction in the compositions they exhibited.

In the rooms devoted to the works selected by July 1, the "academic" section, were a large number of entries, many more than those accepted last year. Yet one wonders why so many were allowed in this time, for the jury, when it came to deciding which entry would be given first prize in this section, was forced to conclude that no one oil painting was good enough to deserve that award and so did not give one! A first prize here, however, in the water colour



JEANNE RHEUME. *Woman in Flowered Dress*

category was given to Albert Cloutier. One should also mention, in this section, a fairly forceful painting of the far north shore of the St. Lawrence done by a young painter named Pierre Petel, from Hull, Quebec.

### **Hunter Lewis elected President of Federation of Canadian Artists**

New president of the Federation of Canadian Artists, elected at its annual meeting held in Montreal on April 18 and 19, is Hunter Lewis, professor of Modern English in the Department of English, University of British Columbia. Mr. Lewis has for long been active in the work of the British Columbia region of the Federation, as have also Mrs. E. Blakewell of Vancouver, who is the new national secretary, and D. M. Flather of Vancouver who is the new national treasurer. Elected as vice-president at the same meeting was Gordon Couling of Guelph, Ontario.

The Federation is now planning a renewed membership drive and hopes to be able to call, within the next year or two, a national conference of artists similar in vitality and importance to the Kingston conference of 1941.

### **Women Painters in Montreal**

With the first robins and long before the daffodils appeared, spring came to Montreal with an exhibition by a score of Canadian women painters (mostly Montrealers) in the city's newest gallery, The West End, on Sherbrooke Street. The paintings, mostly small ones or sketches, were not all important; on the contrary, they were quite unassuming; but this was in their favour: their freshness and spontaneity gave you a lift. There were several forest landscapes by Emily Carr, a fine child portrait and a group of lively sketches by Prudence Heward, several of Pegi Nicol's gay fantasies on the play of children, and a charming little water colour of flowers by Sarah Robertson. Of the painters still with us, one remembers particularly Lilius Torrance Newton's portrait of a boy, Marian Scott's new adventures with plant forms, Anne Savage's wild apples against a mountain background, Louise Gadbois' quick sketches of women, Jeanne Rheume's more stylized portrait and Jori Smith's well realized head. There was a mature point of view in Betty Sutherland's pictures of people—bathers, a game of bridge, a man and woman in bed—a sort of worldliness that stood by itself; and Ghitta Caiserman introduced social comment in her *Park Benches* and the satirical *Candidate*. A new painter who should be worth watching is Didi Reusch, who handles paint with freedom and confidence.

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STANLEY COSGROVE

GIRL WITH SHAWL

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ESTATES PURCHASED

### CANADIAN BALLET FESTIVAL

*Continued from page 154*

dancers who are now abroad, we could, with our present material, assemble at least one good professional ballet company. There are, moreover, three or four interesting choreographers in the country who, working full time with a professional company, and with the artistic collaboration of Canadian artists and musicians, could give us mature works, of interest anywhere in the world. In other words, we could have, tomorrow, a National Ballet—if the resources of all the regional groups could be drawn on.

This is a dream which will have to wait—but only because, for cultural activities of this kind, Canadian money—whether private or public—is among the most lethargic in the civilized world. To dissipate this crippling lethargy is the next thing to be done.

As for a Canadian National Ballet—let me repeat—it is there waiting for either a smart business man, or a smart federal administration, to give it adequate support.

In the meantime, the Ballet Festival will provide an excellent opportunity for Canadians to see what our dancers and choreographers are doing as amateurs. On the evidence of the 1949

session they are doing extremely well. All of them, the good and the not-so-good, deserve our respect, our support and our admiration. Their pioneering job is making cultural history. They are establishing the art of theatre dance in Canada.

### Canadian Painting in Boston

First major art institution in any metropolitan city in the United States to recognize Canadian art by presentation of a comprehensive exhibition of modern Canadian painting is the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. From July 13th to September 25th some ninety paintings, by 38 artists, ranging from the early twentieth century impressionist works of Cullen to present day abstractions by Borduas, will be on view there. While the majority of the works chosen have been painted during the past twenty-five years, a number of excellent canvases done in the period 1900-20 are also included, for example, by Thomson, by Morrice and by members of the Group of Seven. This exhibition therefore will present both a survey of the growth and a description of the present stature of contemporary painting in Canada. The task of assembling it was undertaken by the National Gallery of Canada, at the request of the Museum of Fine Arts.

## NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS

**ART AND THE CHILD.** By Marion Richardson. 88 pp. + 39 plates (24 in colour). London: University of London Press Ltd. \$5.50.

This is a sad book—sad because Marion Richardson no longer walks the earth; sad because beauty always connotes sadness; sad because great teachers are so needed and so few. Sir Kenneth Clark, in his introduction, says: "The pages that follow tell, with the simplicity of a saint, the story of a great reform in education", and, as one reads, one realizes the rich personality of this woman, her passionate sincerity, her great humility, her love of beauty, and her ability to create through others.

It would be easy, one thinks, to follow the gleam, but the gleam is backed by craftsmanship and understanding, by executive ability and imagination, ingenuity, tact, determination, and a quality for leadership.

To all who have children, those who teach them, those who understand and love paintings, the appeal of this book is certain. With the wisdom of a great tradition, the publishers have chosen an almost square format. The type is spaced and simple. The beautiful maroon binding is sprinkled with a golden starry pattern. The thirty-nine plates are delightful. The book teems with inspiration, techniques, methods, materials, and under it all is a sound understanding of the ultimate goal.

The early death of Marion Richardson two years ago, following a long illness, which removed her from active life soon after the War began, ended a career which has had a tremendous effect on art education, not only in England, but also in Canada, where she visited in 1934. In 1938 she was able to write in her diary, at the conclusion of an exhibition of paintings by children from the London schools: "The drawings were . . . as good as I had thought. How little the children know, and how right they are! I saw . . . that there need be no regret". Perhaps, after all, her work was done.

G. PAIGE PINNEO

**MILESTONES OF AMERICAN PAINTING IN OUR CENTURY.** By Frederick S. Wight. 134 pp. + 50 plates (12 in colour). Boston: Institute of Contemporary Art; New York: Chanticleer Press. \$3.50.

Shows of painting from south of the border are as rare in Canada as Canadian shows are in the United States, and Montreal's Museum of Fine Arts was fortunate in having, this spring, the exhibition "Milestones of American Painting in our Century", organized by the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, which is sending it to only four other cities—Colorado Springs, Cleveland, San Francisco and Los Angeles. The story of half a century is told by fifty painters, from George Luks to Jack Levine, in works borrowed from a dozen important museums as well as from individuals and dealers.

Famous pictures like Grant Wood's *American Gothic*, Bellows' *Stag at Sharkey's*, Sheeler's *Upper Deck* and Peter Blume's *South of Scranton* made the show newsworthy and while some of the painters (Marin, for example) were not at their best, and there were the usual unaccountable omissions and questionable inclusions, the exhibits on the whole admirably fulfilled their purpose of highlighting the history of American painting in the period under review.

"The basic romantic character of American painting comes through as the one changeless aspect of American art in the last fifty years," Frederick S. Wight observes in his essay in the catalogue and the exhibition bore out his statement, no less in the modern abstractionists, semi-surrealists and regional painters than in the earlier illustrative reporters like

CHRISTOPHER ADENEY. *Night Shift.* Flat-etch

Awarded the George Reid Medal at the annual exhibition of the Society of Canadian Painter-Etchers and Engravers





*"Sunnyside", a painting in tempera by a fourteen year-old boy, done after seven years of creative art classes in Ontario schools*

*"Me in the Garden", a painting in tempera by a six year-old child. Both these reproductions are from the book "Arts and Crafts in Ontario Schools" by C. D. Gaitskell*





Luks, Sloan, Bellows and Marsh. The strength of the romantic tradition was emphasized by the presence of four "primitives", rather a high proportion, it seemed.

The catalogue is much more than a catalogue. Every painting is reproduced, in generous size, and twelve are in colour—the works of Dove, Demuth, Feininger, Hartley, Davis, Siporin, Rattner, Avery, Hymen Bloom, Adolph Gottlieb, Berman and Stuenkel. Mr. Wight's historical and interpretative summary, carried forward in individual notes on each painter, is succinct yet comprehensive, taking account of many painters not represented in the exhibition. Ordinary catalogues are appended to the exhibitions. Here it works the other way. It is not too much to say that the exhibition illustrated the text, and the book is of value to all who are interested in American painting, whether they had the opportunity of seeing the pictures on the walls or not.

ROBERT AYRE

**PURSUIT OF THE HORIZON. A LIFE OF GEORGE CATLIN.** By Loyd Haberly. 239 pp. + 17 plates. New York: The Macmillan Co. (Canadian Distributors: The Macmillan Co. of Canada) \$6.00.

It has long been the fashion to refer somewhat contemptuously to Catlin's drawings and paintings as being of undoubted value to an ethnologist but hardly worthy of consideration as art. Strangely enough, most of the people who ventured this opinion had but little personal knowledge of his work. They were content to base their opinions, if not actually on the verdict of others, at least on no more than a hasty examination of the illustrations in his best-known work, *Illustration of the Manners and Customs and Condition of North American Indians*. Loyd Haberly's recent book, *Pursuit of the Horizon*, throws a new light on the subject. It is extraordinary that no previous biography of George Catlin should have appeared, for he was well known in the American scene. His collection of Indian portraits and his travelling exhibit of native weapons and clothing were famous throughout the civilized world in the 1840's, and the exploits of the artist were sufficiently striking to attract public attention.

Although self-taught, Catlin was by no means unskilled in the use of his brushes. In Philadelphia, he supported himself by painting portraits in miniature, and produced a number of advertising and commercial canvases in open competition with contemporary artists. It is true that many of his Indian portraits show hurried work, but we must bear in mind that he frequently painted under very difficult conditions. Surrounded by a crowd of half-civilized Indians, whose fear of him as a great Medicine Man was almost offset by their animosity towards him as a white man, irritated by children who filched his paints, and restricted in his materials by the necessity of carrying all his equipment in a light canoe or on horseback, it is surprising that he was able to accomplish as much as he did in a brief hour or two.

While the details of clothing, weapons, and ornament, are authentic, the pose and expression are admittedly a little wooden. Catlin himself more than once said that he was struck by the resemblance in bearing, costume, and weapons, between the American Indian and the warriors of classical Greece and Rome. When he is not concerned with portraiture but is painting scenes of action, such as hunting the buffalo, or shooting flamingoes, his style shows a lively sense of action and a fine sympathy with the men, the beasts, and the wild, romantic world in which he depicted them.

It is only natural that in Canada we should compare his work with that of Paul Kane, a comparison which forces us to the conclusion that Catlin was both the better artist and the better ethnologist. Kane travelled from eastern Canada to the Pacific Coast a generation after Catlin's most active period, but he produced fewer canvases and covered less territory.

Loyd Haberly is fully convinced that Catlin was not only a great artist in his particular genre, but also a great man in his own right, in spite of the fact that circumstances and temperament forced on him in turn the role of beggar, eccentric, showman, and reformer. It is a good book, on a fascinating subject, by a skilful author, and can hardly fail to delight its readers. I am sorry there is no index.

DOUGLAS LEECHMAN

**ART AND CRAFTS IN OUR SCHOOLS.** By C. D. Gaitskell, 62 pp. + illustrations + colour plates. Toronto: Ryerson Press. \$1.00.

This little book contains a great deal of practical information for the Canadian teacher who is concerned with art education. As it has been compiled by the Director of Art for the Ontario Department of Education it gives authoritative backing to the teacher who is attempting to extend school art programmes in up-to-date ways.

Mr. Gaitskell points out in his preface that he has assembled his material after much consultation and checking and rechecking of methods with the teachers in the schools. In this way it becomes especially reliable because both the needs and methods have been closely estimated through first-hand experience.

In the presentation of his views Mr. Gaitskell weakens some excellent principles for procedure by too frequently qualifying his statements. A good book on education should never be autocratic but a more positive tone would give the teachers the reassurance they need.

The points he makes about the importance of creativeness and the fusion of art with living experience are well and timely. They far outweigh, in our opinion, such things as the acquiring of skills and good taste which should, as a matter of course, grow out of the right kind of understanding possessed by the teachers who guide the art programme, and the sustained art experience which they provide for the children. Regarding "taste", in most cases,



children have an uncanny judgment about balance in design and harmony of colour which teachers, and other adults, seem to have lost. It seems therefore, somewhat risky to place much stress on this acquisition—it might become a serious limitation.

The usual text-book character of the book has been happily broken down by the inclusion of colour plates and other photographic illustrations. The last chapter should be very helpful to a teacher in properly evaluating his or her efforts. Lists of films and books are also included and it would perhaps be worth while to suggest that supplementary lists of this kind be supplied to teachers frequently, to stimulate and aid them. Sometimes a few critical notes on such books would help to make clearer a sound educational philosophy. For instance, William

Johnstone's *Child Art to Man Art* contains some methods based on academic art training which we no longer feel should be imposed on school children, although it has as well some interesting suggestions for a new approach to paper cut designs, which makes this activity acceptable to the older child.

NORAH McCULLOUGH

**TRADITION IN SCULPTURE.** By Alec Miller. 160 pp. + 120 plates. London & New York: The Studio Ltd. (Canadian Distributors: The Musson Book Company, Toronto). 30/-

In reading this book it is well to be aware that Mr. Miller is a practising sculptor who elects to carve his creations in stone or wood and consequently appraises historical matter with an understanding eye and mind. Throughout the text there is every evidence of extensive reading and thoughtful research on the part of the author. His philosophic approach to the subject is clearly stated on page 11:—

"... Art is not solely a product of the age which produced it, but it has a life and vitality of its own. . . . this book therefore is an attempt to trace this inheritance of tradition and also the forces which moulded life and thought, so that it was expressed in those sculptured forms in wood and stone, marble and bronze."

After a brief introduction he begins with two interesting chapters on "Definitions and Processes" and "Primitive Sculpture" and continues in chronological sequence from Greek sculpture to the final chapter, "The Twentieth Century—Actions and Reactions".

The author is particularly brilliant in his chapter on mediaeval and Gothic sculpture and provides excellent and rarely seen examples of English, French and German work.

The handling of the subject is masterly. It is only to be expected that with the author's deep reverence for the work of the past, he shows antagonism to the work of our extreme modernists.

Mr. Miller has provided a number of very fine examples of sculpture for the excellently printed plates and added a comprehensive bibliography and index.

This book should be read by the art student, sculptor, craftsman and layman and will be a welcome addition to a not too extensive list of first-rate books on sculpture.

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J. W. BEATTY. *By Dorothy Hoover. 39 pp. + 9 plates (2 in colour). Toronto: The Ryerson Press. \$1.50.*

This addition to the *Canadian Art Series* gives a lively account of Beatty's career which has rightly been described as colourful.

It is also an able and well-balanced appraisal of his work as a painter and his influence as a teacher. The latter is probably his greatest contribution to Canadian art for, as the author says, his painting was soon rather overshadowed by some of his contemporaries.

Looking over the reproductions of Beatty's work, what strikes one (who is not very familiar with it) is the superiority of his earlier paintings. More reproductions would have been welcome.

THOREAU MACDONALD

STUART AND GEORGIAN CHURCHES OUTSIDE LONDON. *By Marcus Whiffen. 118 pp. + 152 plates (frontispiece in colour). London, B. T. Batsford, Ltd. (Canadian Distributors: Clarke, Irwin & Company, Toronto). \$4.75.*

THE AGE OF ADAM. *By James Lees-Milne. 184 pp. + 160 plates (frontispiece in colour). London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd. (Canadian Distributors: Clarke, Irwin & Company, Toronto). \$5.00.*

THE REGENCY STYLE. *By Donald Pilcher. 128 pp. + 130 plates (frontispiece in colour). London: B. T. Batsford, Ltd. (Canadian Distributors: Clarke, Irwin & Company, Toronto). \$3.75.*

These three new books in the "British Art and Building" series indicate a rising interest in the architecture of two periods of prime importance in the history of English culture. For many persons the lingering spell of the Gothic revival still obscures the creative achievements of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Not the least of these are in church architecture. Since, however, Marcus Whiffen's book is not intended to be an adequate account of the English baroque, for it renounces the great churches of London, it becomes a catalogue of country churches, of which most are in some way charming, but none superb, a few, indeed definitely awkward and all, I venture to say, distinctly cool in their effect upon the beholder. But lest we fall too

lightly into an unfavourable comparison with continental examples with their warm emotional appeal, it is well to use this book in conjunction with a valuable new study, by G. W. O. Addleshaw and F. W. Etchells, of the Anglican principles as they were before the Tractarian movements and of their application to architecture. (*The Architectural Setting of Anglican Worship*, Faber & Faber, 1948).

*The Age of Adam* constitutes an excellent guide to a style which in many ways was the high point of the whole Georgian development. It also contains a biography of Robert Adam, the successful Scot whose architecture embodies so much that is typic-

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ally English. By no means a rebel or a radical innovator, Adam fashioned his extremely subtle and polished style largely out of traditional or trusted elements. Well tempered and modestly elegant, his designs also steered a middle course between the opposing currents of the day, between the Roman and the Greek, between the classic and the rococo. James Lees-Milne, whose trenchant remarks on modern times show how much he prefers the age of taste, fixes Adam firmly within his century by his painstaking accounts both of the movements which preceded him—the early Georgian and the Palladian style of the Burlington school—and the

work of his followers; and justifies the whole by a host of fine illustrations.

In this and in Donald Pilcher's book on the Regency, one is constantly reminded of the similarities which exist—up to a point at any rate—between the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and our own times. The monumental solution of the Palladians of the problem of the large building remained valid at least until the advent of the "international style" and the dubious skyscraper, while certain contributions peculiar to the Regency, such as the planning of large sections of towns (if not the entire community) in relation to the landscape, the use of industrially processed and mass-produced materials like cast iron and large sheets of glass, and the introduction of new devices for heating, lighting and drainage—all strike a very modern note. Mr. Pilcher also brings out very clearly several of the more basic features of Regency architecture with which we are now sympathetic: the practical interest in structure along with an insistence on simplicity in the design, and the wide popularization of a sensible sort of "taste". It is interesting to speculate on the state of present-day architecture, had it not been obliged to chart out all this territory anew after the Victorian interruption. Yet, in another light, the Regency style contained the seeds of its own destruction; its whimsical essays into the exotic Turkish and Indian styles were accompanied by a cold and serious Greek and a Gothic which became more

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academic and less adaptable to contemporary needs as it gained in popularity.

Studies in these periods have a definite value for Canadians. After the British conquest our architecture underwent a development which reflected the progression in England from Georgian to Regency, and these books provide us with comparative material for the long neglected study of our early buildings. The closest links with Canada are Mr. Pilcher's references to Jeffrey Wyatt and Joseph Gandy both of whom submitted plans, which we still possess, for a new legislature in Quebec around 1812. All three books make specific reference to the architecture of the Thirteen Colonies with which we shared a common development in our earlier periods.

R. H. HUBBARD

**DRAWINGS BY EUROPEAN MASTERS FROM THE ALBERTINA.** *Introduction by Walter Ueberwasser. 29 pp. + 19 plates + 9 illustrations in text. Iris Colour Books. London: Batsford (Canadian Distributors: Clarke, Irwin & Company, Limited, Toronto). \$5.50.*

It was to be expected that the recent public showings in Europe of drawings from the famous Albertina collection in Vienna would bring forth some pertinent publication and the present volume, attractive in format and generous in size, which permits of almost full size reproduction of several of the drawings, is worthy of the occasion.

Primarily a picture book, the reproductions which include important examples in different media of the Italian, Netherland, German and French schools are for the most part faithfully enough reproduced to give a fair idea of the qualities of the drawings, those in the text being preferable to the larger plates. But good as they are, some of them nevertheless lack a certain clarity and precision in the printing.

The introduction by Walter Ueberwasser has an essay on the Art of Drawing and the Modern Connoisseur, followed by notes on the artists concerned and the works reproduced, and ends with a short historical account of the Albertina Collection. Unfortunately the text has apparently suffered in translation which makes for awkward reading and renders certain passages obscure.

This book is also published in stiff covers with linen back by the Oxford University Press, London and Toronto, at \$7.50.

KATHLEEN M. FENWICK

### CONTRIBUTORS

**Fritz Brandtner**, of Montreal, is a versatile artist whose work ranges from easel painting and murals to commercial design and print-making.

**Guy Glover**, who comes from Vancouver, has studied the ballet both in Europe and America; he has recently been working on film production in New York and Ottawa.

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# THE ART FORUM

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

From most of the writings and speeches on the subject, it would seem that the majority of artists live like disembodied spirits in a mythical and romantic land. They know nothing of history or of finance or of the social state; they live, as Paul Robeson would sing, "Way up in de middle ob de air"; they live—in the inevitable phrase—"in an ivory tower".

Now there is something in this picture very pleasing to the imagination of the artist. To be considered as living an abstract life in an abstract realm: to be quite above the wretched cares of the common man: to be free from the griefs and pains of the average son of Adam,—this is, in a way, a rather gratifying conception. It is all the more gratifying since, of course, it is so completely untrue. . . .

A knowledge of society is not to be gained through reading; indeed, the only instructive book on that subject is the pocket-book; and the thinner that book, the more may be learnt from it. And artists have learnt much.

I may, I hope, be forgiven if I point in this connection to my own experience. It is similar to that of most men who live by their painting.

As an artist, then, I have had two great preoccupations: first, to paint; second, to sell my paintings

to live. To paint, I have had to find subjects; to live, customers. In search of subjects, I have covered the city so that I know it like a postman or a city-directory man; I know the country for fifty miles around better than the most inveterate skier or vacationist. In search of customers, I have met so many people that my acquaintance is as wide as that of an insurance man with a large practice. I have, in a word, been in as many places and met as many persons as, at least, the average business man; and my professional training has enabled me, I think, at least as well as the average, to observe what I have seen.

Our problem as artists is not that we are too much immersed in ourselves, or that we do not know enough or see enough of the world. Quite the contrary. We see too much of it. We lack the quiet, the opportunity to concentrate, that art requires. As the poet says, the world is too much with us. Getting and spending, or at any rate getting, we lay waste our powers. It would, it seems to me, be an excellent thing to see more in Nature that is ours. We could see more, from a pleasing elevation, if we were in ivory towers. A long lease in such a tower would be most welcome to those of us who have difficulty in raising the rent for our more prosaic flats and apartments.

Where to be found, those ivory towers?

Yours truly,  
ERNST NEUMANN,  
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# INDEX — VOL. VI; AUTUMN 1948 - SUMMER 1949

## ARTICLES

AYRE, ROBERT	
Dishnish Diary . . . . .	63
The Canadian Group of Painters . . . . .	98
BALHARRIE, WATSON	
Tradition from the Roof Down . . . . .	61
BELL, ANDREW	
A Recent Exhibition of Contemporary Mexican Art . . . . .	14
Lawren Harris—Retrospective Exhibition of His Painting, 1910-1948 . . . . .	51
Toronto as an Art Centre . . . . .	74
The Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour . . . . .	125
An Exhibition of Canadian Sculpture . . . . .	155
BRANDTNER, FRITZ	
Linoleum Carving . . . . .	164
BROOKS, LEONARD	
Letter from Mexico . . . . .	23
BUCHANAN, DONALD W.	
Le Musée de la Province de Québec . . . . .	69
Two Steps Forward—One Step Backward . . . . .	78
Completing the Pattern of Modern Living . . . . .	111
Exponent of a New Architecture in Paint . . . . .	149
Pegi Nicol MacLeod, 1904-1949 . . . . .	158
DAVIS, ROBERT TYLER	
The Art Museum and the Community . . . . .	67
FAIRLEY, BARKER	
What is Wrong with Canadian Art? . . . . .	24
FRYE, NORTHROP	
The Pursuit of Form . . . . .	54
GLOVER, GUY	
The Canadian Ballet Festival . . . . .	151
HARRIS, LAWREN	
An Essay on Abstract Panting . . . . .	103
HARRISON, ALLAN	
Canadian Artists in Paris—Some Personal Impressions . . . . .	171
JACKSON, A. Y.	
Sarah Robertson, 1891-1948 . . . . .	125
JARVIS, LUCY	
Paintings from East and West . . . . .	167
LEHMANN, H.	
Art and Psychology . . . . .	16
MAYEROVITCH, HARRY	
Man and Stone . . . . .	76
McNAUGHTON, ETHEL	
Towards Better Window Displays . . . . .	117
PINNEO, G. PAIGE	
High School Students Design Textiles . . . . .	19
SCOTT, CHARLES H.	
Festival Week in Vancouver . . . . .	58
New Buildings on Display . . . . .	163
Paintings from East and West . . . . .	167
SHADBOLT, DORIS	
The Vancouver Art Gallery . . . . .	8
STEWART, CLAIR	
Advertising Design in Canada . . . . .	2
TINNING, CAMPBELL	
The Prairies Rediscovered . . . . .	108

## NOTES AND SURVEYS

Canadian Film Awards . . . . .	145
Les Concours Artistiques, 1949 . . . . .	156
Metamorphosis of an Image . . . . .	30
Other Communities Please Copy . . . . .	121
Recent Examples of Domestic Architecture in British Columbia . . . . .	119
These are the Ones the Experts Picked . . . . .	59

## BOOKS REVIEWED

The Age of Adam (Batsford) James Lees-Milner	184
American Painting (Avalon Press & Central Institute of Art and Design) Denys Sutton . . . . .	41
Art and the Child (University of London Press) Marion Richardson . . . . .	181
Art Education in the Province of Ontario (Ryerson) C. D. Gaitskell . . . . .	37
Art in Scotland (Oxford: Toronto) Ian Finlay	131
Art of Lettering (Batsford) Harold Deighton	135
Arts and Crafts in Our Schools (Ryerson) C. D. Gaitskell . . . . .	183
Ballet Design Past and Present (Studio) Cyril W. Beaumont . . . . .	38
British Drawings (Collins) Michael Ayrton . . . . .	42
The Care of Pictures (Columbia) George L. Stout . . . . .	135
Chinese Court Costumes (Royal Ontario Museum of Archaeology) Helen E. Fernald	37
Cornelius Kriehoff (Ryerson) Marius Barbeau	38
Drawings by European Masters from the Albertina (Batsford) Walter Ueberwasser . . . . .	187
Early Christian Mosaics (Batsford) . . . . .	131
Graphis (Amstutz & Herdag) . . . . .	89
Hand Weaving for Amateurs (Studio) Helen Coates . . . . .	132
An Introduction to Art Activities (Clarke Irwin) Ralph L. Wickiser . . . . .	132
Made in America (Doubleday) John A. Kouwenhoven . . . . .	131
Mechanization Takes Command (Oxford) Siegfried Giedion . . . . .	85
Men of Taste (Batsford) Martin S. Briggs . . . . .	41
Milestones of American Painting in Our Century (Chanticleer Press) Frederick S. Wight	181
Picasso, His Inner Life (Philosophical Library) Paul Eluard . . . . .	89
Pursuit of the Horizon (Macmillan) Loyd Haberley . . . . .	183
Refus Global (Perron) Paul-Emile Borduas; Claude Gauvreau; and others . . . . .	85
The Regency Style (Batsford) Donald Pilcher	184
Stuart and Georgian Churches Outside London (Batsford) Marcus Whiffen . . . . .	184
Tradition in Sculpture (Studio) Alec Miller . . . . .	184
The Varsity Story (Macmillan) Morley Callaghan . . . . .	86
The Water Colour Drawings of Thomas Rowlandson (Watson Guptill) W. Heintzelmann	38

## DEPARTMENTS

Art Forum . . . . .	45, 136, 189
Coast to Coast in Art . . . . .	31, 82, 127, 175
Design Index . . . . .	33, 59, 111

## COLOUR PLATES

Electro-Convulsive Therapy — <i>Paintings by a patient</i> . . . . .	17
FitzGerald, Lionel Lemoine— <i>The Little Plant</i> . . . . .	28
The Loon's Necklace— <i>Indian masks from the film</i> . . . . .	147
Paintings by Children— <i>The Big Fire</i> . . . . .	82
<i>Me in the Garden</i> . . . . .	182
<i>Sunnyside</i> . . . . .	182
Thomson, Tom, <i>March</i> . . . . .	Cover, Vol. VI, No. 2

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